

**IN SEARCH OF MODERNITY - A STUDY OF
THE CONCEPTS OF LITERATURE, AUTHORSHIP
AND NOTIONS OF SELF IN "TRADITIONAL"
MALAY LITERATURE**

HADIJAH BTE RAHMAT

**UNIVERSITY OF LONDON
SCHOOL OF ORIENTAL AND AFRICAN STUDIES**

1996



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A Thesis Submitted By
HADIJAH BTE RAHMAT

In Fulfillment of the Requirement For the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

In Indonesian and Malay Studies

**UNIVERSITY OF LONDON
SCHOOL OF ORIENTAL AND AFRICAN STUDIES**

1996

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, I would like to record my thanks to my employer, the National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, which gave me the opportunity to pursue my study by granting three years study leave on full-pay, under NIE Staff Development Sponsorship Scheme.

My special thanks are due to Dr. Russell Jones, for sharing his vast knowledge and experience of Malay philology and manuscripts; Professor Kamal M Abu Deeb, Department of the Languages and Cultures of the Near and Middle East, SOAS, for allowing me to attend his MA course in Comparative Literature, and giving useful comments in the early stage of my research; Professor V.I. Braginsky, Department of the Languages and Cultures of South East Asia and the Islands, for sharing his profound knowledge of traditional Malay literature, particularly on Sufi literature, and for giving useful suggestions and providing some materials for my research.

My grateful thanks are also due to Dr. Nigel G Phillips, Head of the Department of the Languages and Cultures of South East Asia and the Islands, who supervised my work during the first year of my research, whose kindness and support have been a great motivation throughout my study; and Dr. E.U. Kratz, my supervisor, who has given full commitment and efficient supervision. His perceptive comments and suggestions have been a great stimulus and challenge to me to accomplish my work.

I also wish to express my great appreciation and love for Ms Annabel Teh Gallop, Curator for Indonesian and Malay, Oriental and India Office Collections of the British Library, London, who, despite her heavy schedule has devoted her precious time to give committed suggestions, to provide some research materials, to edit the language of this thesis, and to have offered other invaluable assistance and support throughout my three year stay in London.

My thanks are also due to my sisters, Maslindah and Hashurah, my brother, Hathemi, and Rosnah from the School of Arts, NIE, who have assisted me in computer matters; and my parents, for their encouragement and prayers.

Finally, my grateful thanks are due to my husband, Hajis, whose love, understanding, patience, sacrifices and cheerfulness have been a great source of the inner and outer strength essential for fulfilment the of this academic task.

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ABSTRACT

The subject of modernity has become one of great concern among scholars of Malay literature and has provoked a strong and continuous debate. There are various views and schools of thought on the origins of modernity, and particularly on the different literary figures identified as the "pioneers" of a new Malay literature and the various criteria employed to define the new or "modern" Malay literature. These differences have led to different ways of and approaches to defining and interpreting Malay literary history. This study attempts to analyse the issues raised.

Initially, Abdullah Munsyi is widely acknowledged as a "pioneer" of new literary developments; but this view was later been challenged by studies which put forward other literary figures as "pioneers", e.g. Hamzah Fansuri and Salleh Perang. This study attempts to go beyond the common perception of the issues. It covers seven authors: Hamzah Fansuri, Lauddin, Ahmad Rijaluddin, Fakhir Saghir, Abdullah Munsyi, Raja Ali Haji and Salleh Perang. This study focuses only on those works of the authors, namely those considered the most important and representative of their writings.

Generally, this study focuses on three main aspects of the texts: the concept of literature, the concept of authorship and the notion of self, expressed explicitly and implicitly. These aspects are considered important to understand the distinctive features of these texts, and to evaluate their role in and contribution to new literary developments. Criteria and theories of

modernity which have been aired with reference to literature in Malay are discussed and compared with other literary traditions and experiences, such as the Western and other Asian literary experiences, in order to interpret the meaning of "the modern" in the context of various intellectual and literary traditions.

This study attempts to offer a practical definition of the concept of modernity and to make further suggestions to solve the problem of understanding the complexity of the processes of modernisation of Malay literature, and to clarify some related misconceptions. Malay literature here is treated within its proper literary, cultural and historical contexts. By recognizing its unique discourse and culture, this study aims to derive at the true form and meaning of literary modernity and, more significantly, to restore its integrity.

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The subject of modernity has become one of great concern among scholars of Malay literature and has provoked a strong and continuous debate. There are various views and schools of thought on the origins of modernity, and particularly on the different literary figures identified as the "pioneers" of a new Malay literature and the various criteria employed to define the new or "modern" Malay literature. These differences have led to different ways of and approaches to defining and interpreting Malay literary history. This study attempts to analyse the issues raised.

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The term "Malay literature" here is used in its wider cultural and linguistic context, referring to the literature of the Malay World (*Dunia Melayu*), i.e. the literature produced in the Malay language and its linguistic varieties, by writers from Malaysia, Indonesia, Brunei and Singapore. The selection of literary figures and their works for this study was not based on a certain historical periods, but my perception of the intrinsic qualities of particular works and writers.

These works were written in several historical periods: Hamzah Fansuri's syair and prose works were probably written between 1588-1607; Lauddin's biography, *Hikayat Nakhoda Muda*, was copied in 1788; Ahmad Rijaluddin's travelogue was written in 1811; Fakih Saghir's *Surat Keterangan* was probably written in 1829 but definitely after the

outbreak of the Padri War in Sumatra in 1820; Abdullah Munsyi's *Hikayat Abdullah* was written in 1843, but only published in 1849; Raja Ali Haji's first version of *Tuhfat al-Nafis* was written between 1865-66, and the long version before 1872; and Salleh Perang's diary was written in 1883, his letter in 1894, and the account of his life before 1915; all three were first published post-humously in 1928. So these authors are of varying historical backgrounds, and their works cover a period of about three centuries, from the seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

The texts selected are studied from two perspectives: their inner and outer forms. From the inner perspective, we shall discuss their concept of authorship, notions of self, dominant themes and the narrative functions. For the outer forms, the focus will be on their compositional structure, language, literary devices and the narrative techniques employed. Generally, this study focuses on three main aspects of the texts:

- a. the concept of literature
- b. the concept of authorship
- c. the notion of self

These three aspects are considered important to define the distinctive features of the writings of these authors, and to evaluate their role in and contribution to literary developments. From these aspects, we can also find out the relevance of the criteria of modernity suggested to the writings of these authors.

This thesis is divided into six parts. Part One (Chapter one), discusses the main studies conducted so far on the history, origins and development of new Malay literature. It

focuses on the different views and schools of thought on the subject, particularly on the different literary figures identified as the "pioneers" of new literature, and the various criteria employed to define the new or "modern" literature. In addition, studies on the concept of modernity will be discussed to identify the problems related to the notions of literary modernity in the Malay context.

Part Two (Chapter Two) explores some comparative discussions on the subject by looking at the Western and other Asian literary experiences. It attempts to identify and to interpret the meaning of "the modern" in its respective intellectual and literary traditions. This will provide us with a strong basis for comparison, and, at the same time, will enable us to understand some of the thinking and perspectives which shaped the views discussed in Chapter One, and to judge their applicability to Malay literature.

Part Three (Chapter Three) focuses on the nature of the Malay literary tradition by describing its narrative conventions, based on oral and written traditions. The main features of Malay narrative conventions will be identified from exploratory studies and research already carried out. Thus, this chapter will illustrate the main features of the conventions as perceived and applied so far.

After identifying the conventions, the next step of the study is to make a comprehensive analysis of selected works of the seven authors. Part Four, which comprises eight chapters, Chapters 4 to 11, aims to discover the distinctive features of these works and address some of the related problems raised in Chapter One. The work(s) of each author are discussed in a separate chapter, and are analysed from three aspects: the

concepts of literature and authorship, and notions of self. This is followed by an overview and comparison of the works of all the seven authors, to identify any similarities and differences among them; this is dealt with in Chapter 11. Part Four is the main part or the core of the study.

The concluding part (Chapter 12) reviews the evidence, and attempts to offer a practical definition of the concept of modernity and to make further suggestions to solve the problem of understanding the complexity of the process of modernisation of Malay literature, and to clarify some related misconceptions.

As will have been recognized, all the texts discussed here were written by hand and products of the age of manuscripts and most of them came into being prior to the introduction of printing. A Postscript (Chapter 13) looks briefly at some of the writings produced after the introduction of the printing press. This chapter attempts to reassess the role and contribution of the printing press in the development of the new literature, thus reviewing the claims of some scholars about the printing press described in the Chapter One. It also aims to evaluate the relationship between the works of the seven authors and writings after the introduction of the printing press. This Postscript covers works of a different historical period and involves rather different literary issues. It is included in this study, as it is felt that the works of the authors discussed here, are essential for the future developments as they open another window onto Malay literature which, however, requires a special treatment or an academic study on its own.

PART I

PROBLEMS AND ISSUES OF MODERNITY IN MALAY LITERATURE

CHAPTER 1

STUDIES ON THE ORIGINS AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF NEW MALAY LITERATURE

Introduction

The study of the development of literature, or literary history, is very important and interesting as it not only explains developments in the concepts of beauty and literary tastes, and the values of its creators or writers, but it also reflects historical, social and intellectual developments in their society. Literature is a good mirror or valid indicator of society.¹

A study of the development of literature would lead us to search for its genesis, process of growth or stages of development, elements or features, forms of classification, sources of influence, and its role and functions for literary audiences; in short, its nature, identity and sphere of influence in a society. To date this kind of study has attracted various approaches and disciplines of knowledge, all making continuous attempts to explore and discover the true meaning and significance of literature.

This chapter attempts to describe the main studies conducted so far on the history, origins and development of new Malay and Indonesian literature. It shall focus on the different views and schools of thought on the subject, particularly on the different literary figures identified as the “pioneers” of new literature, and the various criteria employed to define new or “modern” literature. In addition, studies on the concept of modernity will be

¹ See Ian Watt, “Literature and Society,” in R.N. Wilson 1964; and also Malcolm Bradbury 1971.

discussed to identify the problems related to the notions of literary modernity in the Malay context.

RESEARCH ON MALAY LITERATURE

Before we discuss the studies of new literature, let us look into the study of traditional literature because it has great implications for the study of new literature. The study of traditional Malay literature was initiated and developed by European scholars during the colonial period in the 19th century, and from its inception to date has relied on philology as the core discipline of studies.²

The earliest published reference to Malay literature, which mentioned a list of Malay manuscripts, was by Francois Valentijn, a Dutch missionary-historian, in the fifth volume of his work *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indien* in 1726. Ten years later, G.H.Werndly appended a list of 69 Malay manuscripts to his work entitled *Maleische Spraakkunst*. However the earliest book which focused on Malay literature was only written in 1845 by J.J.de Hollander, a professor at the Royal Military Academy in Holland, who compiled a "handbook for the Study of Malay language and Literature". The handbook was written in Dutch and became a very important guide for Malay literature then. It became the sole authority for 92 years and six editions were published by the end of the century, until C.Hooykaas published his *Over Maleische Literatuur* in 1937.³ However, it is Winstedt's book, *A History of Malay Literature* (1940) which has been considered the most

² For further discussions on Philology see Ismail Hussein 1966, 1974:41-130.

³ See C.Hooykaas 1937; Ismail Hussien 1974:5-6.

comprehensive attempt to write a history of traditional Malay literature so far.⁴ There have been a few attempts after Winstedt's by other scholars or writers, such as Mohd Taib Osman (1965), Arifin Nur (1964), Arena Wati (1964) and Liaw (1975, 1991, 1993), but their works were still very much influenced by Winstedt's approach or were merely expansions of his work.

Winstedt's history of traditional Malay literature, which mainly focused on the external influences (Hindu, Islam and Javanese) while ignoring "local genius" and creativity, has been widely criticized (Ismail Hussein 1974; Sweeney 1990; Muhammad Haji Salleh 1988; Kratz 1992).

Such "literary histories" and other studies published so far only give us very little knowledge about the extent of traditional Malay literature.⁵ According to Kratz, the philological and literary study of Malay texts has scarcely started, and all the discussions and views are preliminary, provisional and part-hypothetical; in fact our knowledge of manuscripts, texts and their transmission is still far too limited to venture definite conclusions (Kratz 1979:1-11).⁶

The problems and complexities involved in studying traditional Malay literature or in any attempt to produce a complete account or history of traditional literature, for years,

⁴ First published in JMBRAS, 1940, 17-3:1-141 and later republished by The Oxford University Press in 1961. The 3rd edition was revised, edited and introduced by Y.A. Talib and published by the Malaysian Branch of The Royal Asiatic Society, 1991, reprint no. 12. For a review of this edition, see Kratz 1992.

⁵ Teeuw has attempted to provide a complete survey of studies on Malay and Bahasa Indonesia. It gives very useful overview and preliminary accounts of the state of art of the studies then. See A.Teeuw 1961.

⁶ For his critical evaluation on this issue, refer to his articles, Kratz 1981:229-243 and 1992:31-37.

have become a subject of concern among other scholars of Malay studies such as Ismail Hussein (1974:1-10); Muhd Haji Salleh and Harun Mat Piah (1989:1-12); Sweeney (1990a:1-22); and Liaw (1989:13-23). They have raised several issues or problems such as the lack of systematic documentation of literary data and expertise in the area, the unsuitability of concepts or terminologies used, and the invalidity of criteria, principles and approaches adopted so far, and have therefore reiterated the crucial need for further research and discussion on the subject.⁷

RESEARCH ON THE EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF NEW MALAY LITERATURE

The complexities and problems involved in studying traditional Malay literature have great implications for the study of new Malay literature, especially for the formulation of its origins and early development. The nature and history of traditional literature, which itself is the foundation of new literature, are still largely unknown. This state of "uncertainty" is still present and continues to spread and has therefore shaped our perspective and understanding of new Malay literature.

RESEARCH ON THE ORIGINS OF NEW MALAY LITERATURE

The earliest accounts of the development of new Malay literature are Za'ba's "Modern Developments" published in 1940 and "Recent Malay Literature", a continuation of the former, in 1941 (See Abdullah Hussain and Khalid Hussain 1974:240-293). Za'ba's accounts were to form the basis for the numerous histories (*sejarah*) and surveys (*ikhtisar*) that came after them, some of them produced for school use after Malayan Independence in 1957. Basically these works are often expansions and updates of Za'ba's articles, relying

⁷ For further discussion on the problems of documentation of Malay literature see Rohani Rustam and Anwar Ridhwan 1979.

heavily on him particularly for the period relating to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The study of and research on new Malay literature at university only began in the 1950s, with the formation of the Malay Studies Department at the University of Malaya (1953), later complemented by the foundation of Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka (1959). From 1957 to the 1960s, about 45 research works on the issues and authors of the new literature, in the form of academic exercises or theses, were produced (Ismail Hussein 1974:1). It was only in the 1960s that the writing of the history of this new literature was attempted. The first attempt was by Anas Haji Ahmad in 1964 in his book, *Sastra Melayu Baru*. This book was actually written for school use and is merely a reformulation of well-known data or facts about the literature.⁸ Mohd Taib Osman also made a contribution with his book *Modern Malay Literature*. However it was Li Chuan Siu's books, *Ikhtisar Sejarah Kesusasteraan Melayu Baru 1830-1945* and *Ikhtisar Sejarah Pergerakan dan Kesusasteraan Melayu Modern 1945-1965*, consisting of 798 pages, which may be said to be the most "massive" work to appear in Malay so far. However, these books fail to give the necessary social and political analysis or coherent picture that would qualify them as literary histories or historical accounts (See Ismail Hussein 1974:4-5; Tan Ching Kwang 1986:97-115).

⁸ The first edition (1964) was issued separately from the one dealing with the traditional Malay literature, *Sastera Melayu Lama*. From the third edition (1965) onwards, both parts were issued together as *Sastera Melayu lama dan Baru*. The newest edition is printed by MASA Enterprise, Malaysia, 1988, with an additional chapter on the literary institutions in M'sia. After Annas's, there are a few other school histories of the new Malay literature. Among the more recent ones are: Yahya Ismail, *Sejarah Sastera Melayu Modern* (1976); and Wan Shamsuddin M.Yussof, *Sejarah Sastera Melayu Modern Sesudah Tahun 1800* (1976).

The most recent effort was made by Dewan Bahasa Pustaka, and published in two volumes, *Sejarah Kesusasteraan Melayu*, Jilid 1 (1981) and Jilid 2 (1990). These books are the products of groupwork by full-time researchers working for the institution and receiving professional advice and scholarly support. This study can be considered as a serious pioneering attempt to view the history of Malay literature "externally and internally" with special attention to developments in literary genres such as poetry, short-stories, novels and drama.⁹

We also see increasing numbers of academic exercises or theses and research works on specific areas of pre-war Malay and Indonesian literature emerging from local and foreign universities, and some of those are later published in book form. Examples of such efforts are Mohd Taib Osman's *Bahasa rencana akhbar-akhbar Melayu hingga ke tahun 1941* (1964), *Renungan- antologi esei Melayu dalam tahun 1924-1941* (1964); *Shaer* by Hassan Ahmad (1964), *Bibliography of Malay and Arabic periodicals published in the Straits Settlements and peninsular Malay states* by Roff (1972); *Cerpen-cerpen Melayu sebelum perang* by Hashim Awang (1975) and *Al-Imam - Its role In Malay society 1906-1908* by Abu Bakar Hamzah (1981).¹⁰

⁹ See Safian Hussain, Mohd Thani Ahmad and Johan Jaaffar, 1981:vii; and Zaharah Ibrahim, 1990. Vol.2 covers the development of Malay literature from 1942 to 1979, by looking at the development of various genres (including literary criticism which was not dealt with in the earlier volume) and focussing on continuity and change in the innovations discussed.

¹⁰ For other studies see the followings:
Muhd bin Dato' Muda (1938:361-408); Muhd bin Dato'Muda'(1940); Za'ba(1941:244-50); Birch(1879:51-5); Ahmad bin Nik Hassan (1958); Elyas Omar(1959); Omar Mohd Hashim (1961:343-56); Ahmad Saleh (1962:164-9); Zainuddin Abdul Rahman (1966) Roff(1967); Dulkipli Mohd Salleh (1972) Suib Abdul Manap (1973); Foulcher(1974) Ali Ahmad(1975); Muhd Fadzil bin Othman (1976); John B.Kwee (1978); Ho Yew Fatt (1988); Mohd Khalid Mohd Taib (1981); Proudfoot (1985,1987,1991); A.Wahab Ali (1991); Fauziah Ibrahim (1994); Amat Adam (1994).

These studies of specific aspects of Malay language and literature, and also the above attempts in writing general Malay literary history, though important and useful in providing basic information and knowledge about literary development in the pre-war period, are very much preliminary in nature. They have yet to give us a clear and coherent picture of new Malay literature and have not provided us with adequate answers to the questions of its origins. There is still a great gap or vacuum of knowledge between old and new literature. The features, nature and functions of literature during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries are still unknown and have not been formulated, even though this was the period, in which different kinds of literature emerged, thus paving the way for the birth of new Malay and Indonesian literature (Kratz 1979:8).

This vacuum of knowledge is clearly reflected in various school textbooks, and is presented to students without realising that this may create confusion. Moreover, this has great implications for the perception and understanding of the students as literary consumers and potential future writers and scholars of literature.¹¹

Another consequence of such limited studies is that it brings us to the awful, painful reality of our state of knowledge of Malay and Indonesian literature: that the notion or concept of “modern” is still unclear; and this is explicitly reflected in the following debates about the origin of new literature.

¹¹ For various methods of classifications of literary developments presented in school texts see the followings: B.Simorangkir Simanjuntak; Zuber Usman (1966); Aziz Safiudin (1955); H.B.Jassin (1962); Nursinah Supardo (n.d.); Ajip Rosidi, ; Gazali Dunia; B.P.Situmorang (1980); and Pamusuk Eneste (1988).

THE ORIGIN OF NEW MALAY LITERATURE

The origin of new literature has long been a subject of debate among scholars/ writers, but until now no definitive solution has been arrived at. There are several schools of thoughts, with each school projecting a different literary figure or factor as the "pioneer" or innovator of change with respect to the development of this literature.

THE ROLE OF ABDULLAH BIN ABDUL KADIR MUNSİYI

Abdullah bin Abdul Kadir Munsyi (1797-1854), is probably the best known and most popular and controversial figure on the Malay literary scene. His two main works are *Hikayat Abdullah* and *Kisah Pelayaran Abdullah*.¹² Abdullah's life and his works have attracted great interest and continuous discussions among scholars of Malay and Indonesian studies and have also inspired some creative responses.¹³

Winstedt considered Abdullah "*the greatest innovator in Malay letter [who] came of stock and surroundings that had for centuries produced Malay writers. His great-grandfather was an Arab from Yaman, a teacher of Arabic and religion, who migrated to Nagore and married a Tamil woman... His works, though criticised for Anglophile bias have been an inspiration to generations of Malays. Foreigner though he was, he led them back from an arid desert of euphuism and imitation of foreign models to a realism, that had started in the fifteenth century and is in accord with the genius of a race of extroverts.*"

(Winstedt 1940:117-12). Thus Winstedt, while commending Abdullah for his contribution

¹² For details descriptions on Abdullah's life and works see A.H.Hill 1970; A.C.Milner 1980:111-119; H.F.O.B.Traill 1981:35-55.

¹³ For the list of early writings on Abdullah, see Yahya Ismail 1964:547-552. There are several creative works which have been written about Abdullah or are inspired by his life and writings, eg. Ahmad Hassan (1958), "Corat corek Abdullah Munshi," a tablo; a short story by Nirwan Ananda (1964), "Darihal Tuan Raffles hendak pulang"; drama "Imbas" by Hashim Yassin (1979).

in introducing “realism” in Malay writing, gave the credit to his non-Malay, Arab-Tamil descent.

Za’ba also commended Abdullah’s realistic writings, which to him had initiated “modern” Malay literature. *“Modern Malay literature began with Abdullah bin Abdul Kadir Munshi, the first writer to depart from the old tradition of supernatural romance and legendary history and to record contemporary events.”* (Za’ba 1940:142)

Emeis expressed similar views, but giving language as the main area of innovation. Abdullah, according to him, was the first Malay journalist who departed from the language of *hikayat* and used everyday language to describe his experience. *“Karangan-karangan Abdullah tidak lagi masuk kesusasteraan kuno, karangan-karangan itu merupakan peralihan kepada bahasa Melayu moden...Abdullah meninggalkan bahasa hikayat. Dapat juga kita sebut dia wartawan Melayu yang pertama, yang menceritakan semua yang dilihatnya dan dialaminya dalam bahasa Melayu yang biasa, sungguhpun ada cacatnya, untuk menjadi pengajaran bagi orang senegerinya.”* (Emeis 1949:200-1)

Abdullah’s status as a “pioneer” of the new Malay literature was further reinforced by Skinner, who called him “Bapa Sastera Melayu Moden” (Father of modern Malay literature). To Skinner, Abdullah was the first writer influenced by new elements brought about by Western culture to introduce them in his writings. *“Munshi Abdullah ialah pengarang yang mula-mula sekali kena pengaruh anggapan-anggapan baharu yang dibawa oleh kebudayaan Barat itu dan di dalam karangan-karangannya, Abdullah telah berjaya memberi corak baharu kepada sastera Melayu.”* (Skinner 1959:vi)

Skinner describes Abdullah's innovations as follows:

"....dalam semua karangannya terdengar suara Abdullah, suara 'AKU'nya. Dan di sini, agaknya terletak kemodenan Abdullah...baharu dengan Abdullah timbullah anggapan bahawa seseorang pengarang bukan sahaja seorang 'tukang tulis' yang, seperti tukang-tukang yang harus menurut kehendak hati penyewanya atau tuannya, melainkan seorang manusia dengan pendapatnya dan pendiriannya sendiri yang dapat, malahan harus, dikeluarkan dalam karangan-karangannya." (Skinner 1959:4)

Skinner (1982), uses the term "author-conscious style" to describe Abdullah's innovations. Abdullah, according to him, had broken the classical convention of "rāja-centredness", to establish his own focus, which was based on realism.

Skinner also adds another view to discussions on the origins of new literature when he introduces the concept of "**transitional literature**" to characterize and classify certain types of 19th century Malay literature, which in subject matter tend to break away from the traditional mould while still maintaining traditional elements in their language and style.¹⁴ He even gives us an example of this "transitional" literature in the travel-diary of Ahmad Rijaluddin, *Hikayat Perintah Negeri Benggala*. He then compares Ahmad's work and Abdullah's, and finds that Ahmad's is still too firmly anchored in the past to be termed "modern" and does not display the intellectual curiosity and fire and passion found in Abdullah's writings (Skinner 1982:7).

¹⁴ See C.Skinner 1978:466-87.

However E.U.Kratz has expressed his reservations on this concept. For details see his review on Skinner's *Hikayat Perintah Negeri Benggala* (Kratz 1985:184-85).

Skinner's criterion is also applied by Matheson and Milner in examining another of Abdullah's writings, *Pelayaran ka-Judah*, which is then compared to four other Malay texts to find out about Malay perception of the **haj**. According to them, despite its brevity and incompleteness, Abdullah's account, which emphasizes the personal, individual experience of the pilgrim, represents a new approach to writing about the **haj**.¹⁵ They describe his innovative style of writing as follows:

"...the personal nature of Abdullah's pilgrimage is evident not only from his references to 'passion and longing for the house of Allah' but also emphasized by the style in which the account is written. We have noted that Abdullah's concern with eye-catching detail and with the unusual in custom and place has much in common with modern journalism. It is a concern which contrasts strongly with the more inward-looking Hikayat Hang Tuah and, to a lesser extent, the Tuhfat. Traditional texts when dealing with outside(non-Malay) world usually emphasize the familiar and the similar; Abdullah, on the other hand, influenced by his European associates, revelled in describing what was new to him. Abdullah's modernity is equally apparent in his writing style, in particular his use of the authorial 'I' ". (Matheson and Milner 1984:23)

"Seen in the context of traditional literature, therefore, Abdullah's writing is radical not only in its condemnation of the Kerajaan system. The influence and example of the Europeans with whom he came into contact in the Straits Settlements stimulated his interest in the individual and in the experience of the individual. It also introduced him to new literary idioms. Experimentation is a hallmark of Abdullah's work. The poem at the end of

¹⁵ See V.Matheson and A.C.Milner, *Perceptions of the Haj- Five Malay texts* (1984). The four texts are: *Hikayat Hang Tuah*, *Tuhfat al-Nafis* by Raja Ali Haji and Raja Ahmad, *Chatetan ka-Tanah Suchi* by Harun Aminurrashid and *Satu perjalanan pendek yang mengesankan* by H.M.Jajuli.

his account, for instance, the poem which speaks of his longing for the house of Allah, does not conform to the conventions of the Malay syair. He experimented in order to convey his feelings. In using the first person, he also reaches out to a new form, and in doing so he gives attention, in his account of the haj, to the personal experience of the pilgrim." (Matheson and Milner 1984:24)

Skinner's opinion of Abdullah is widely accepted and repeatedly expressed by local scholars such as Liu Chuan Siu (1966), Taib Osman (1988), Kassim Ahmad (1981), Yahya Ismail (1987), Muhammad Haji Saleh (1988) and Ungku Maimunah (1987). Some of them, however, have given additional or slightly different explanations for their judgement of Abdullah as the "pioneer" of new Malay literature.

To Kassim Ahmad, Abdullah introduced new, democratic values to Malay society and injected new spirit into the community. "*Kesusasteraan bukan lagi semata-mata untuk menghibur, tetapi untuk membuka mata dan menimbulkan kesedaran. Lebih-lebih lagi dengan konsep ini Abdullah telah memberikan nilai baru kepada seseorang anggota masyarakat. Dalam masyarakat, raja dan rakyat diletakkan pada taraf yang 'sama tinggi dan sama rendah'. Inilah bibit -bibit demokrasi yang ditanam seratus tahun dulu dalam keadaan yang amat pincang. Dapatlah kita katakan bahawa dengan Abdullah kesusasteraan Melayu telah melangkah dari bumi feudal Hikayat Hang Tuah ke alam demokrasi yang lebih luas dan realistik....Perihal bahawa dialah yang mula-mula memasukkan semangat baru ke dalam jiwa bangsa kita dan bentuk hasil-hasil sastera Angkatan 50 (angkatan baru) sudahlah cukup untuk kita menganugerahi nama 'Bapa Kesusasteraan Melayu Moden'.*" (Kassim Ahmad 1981:xiv-xv)

Mohd Taib Osman is also of the opinion that Abdullah's contribution to Malay literature is in the content and subject matter of his works, which discussed his personal criticisms of contemporary issues or events. "*His writings are considered as forerunner of modern Malay literature, not so much because of the style of his language which has shed much of the language cliches to be found in the traditional Malay literature, but more because of the content and subject matter of his major works which deal with the writer's description and observation of contemporary everyday events and happenings, and his comments on them. It is his criticism of the traditional Malay society with its customs and practices that makes him different from his predecessors, the writers of traditional Malay works.*" (Mohd Taib Osman 1988:281). A.Bakar Hamid adds that with Abdullah's social criticism, a new feature in Malay literature began (A.Bakar Hamid 1979:8).

Muhammad Hj.Salleh shares Taib's view. "*His writings continued the classical style, yet in content and attitude they were more independent and critical, thus introducing obviously modern elements and a new perspective. Never before had the issue of the individual as writer or writer as individual been brought to the fore in such a forthright manner as in the books of Abdullah. In them too one sees little of the traditional sentiment or aesthetic decorum of the old Malay writers.*" (Muhammad Haji Salleh 1988a:xiii)

On the other hand, Yahya Ismail is of the opinion that Abdullah's innovations were not only manifest in the content of his works, but also in his form of writing, which is autobiography. "*Ditinjau dari segi bentuk sastra, karangan Abdullah yang berbentuk autobiography adalah suatu bentuk baru dalam kesusasteraan Melayu. Bukan sahaja bentuk sasteranya itu baru, tetapi juga isi dan semangat di dalam karangan-karangannya*

itu juga baru. Abdullah dengan lantang mengecam adat orang-orang Melayu yang lapuk, mengecam kekejaman dan pemerintahan kuku besi raja-raja Melayu dan mengecam orang-orang Melayu yang mengabaikan bahasa mereka.” (Yahya Ismail 1987:3)

A.Bakar Hamid, on the other hand, disagrees that Abdullah had introduced new forms of writing. *“Dalam bidang puisi Abdullah telah melanjutkan tradisi syair, seperti pada Syair Singapura (atau Kampung Gelam) Terbakar. Dalam karya-karya prosanya, terdapat di sana sini sisipan pantun. Juga bentuk prosa yang digunakan oleh Abdullah tidak dapat dikatakan baru. Abdullah tidak menulis novel atau cerpen. Ia menulis autobiografi atau riwayat hidup diri dan memoir atau kenang-kenangan hidup. Bentuk biografi atau memoir ini tidak dapat dikatakan baru dalam sejarah kesusasteraan Melayu. Marsden pada tahun 1835 pernah membuat terjemahan dari naskah Melayu lama yang diberi tajuk ‘Memoirs of a Malay Family’ “ (A.Bakar Hamid 1979:9).¹⁶*

Abdullah's criticisms of Malay society are accepted by some scholars as innovative in literary content. However, this very aspect of his works is rather contemptible for Hassan Ahmad. He disagrees with Za'ba's reason for naming Abdullah as a pioneer. To him, long before Abdullah, there were Malay writers such as Ar-Raniri and Hamzah Fansuri who had already departed from the old tradition of supernatural romance and legendary history. Even though he finds that Abdullah's innovations and contributions are in his writing technique and language, he does not regard his works as representing and reflecting the true nature of Malay society.

¹⁶ The concept and study of Indonesian and Malay autobiography was recently raised by C.W.Watson (1989) and later it was debated by Sweeney (1990).

"Abdullah dengan tidak disedari memperlihatkan bahawa dia sebenarnya tidak memahami bangsanya sendiri. Dia hanya dapat memahami masyarakat Melayu zamannya dari suatu sudut yang lain, iaitu dari sudut nilai-nilai kebudayaan asing yang sama sekali tidak dikenal oleh orang-orang Melayu itu. Akibatnya, Abdullah tidak dapat langsung menjelmakan dirinya ke dalam sastra Melayu sebagai seorang manusia yang mewakili keperibadian masyarakat dan bangsanya sendiri." (Hassan Ahmad 1976:289)

Generally, those who consider Abdullah as the "pioneer of modern Malay literature", have given several factors for their claims. Basically they see his individualistic attitude, spirit or values (as reflected in the content or subject matter of his works), as very much different from his predecessors or contemporaries, and these "innovations" are therefore regarded as elements of "modern" writing. There are however some differences in opinion on his language and writing styles. Some still consider Abdullah's language and style of writing as traditional, but others see those aspects as innovative. Nevertheless these factors are not seen to discredit or limit his popular status as the "pioneer of modern Malay literature".

THE ROLE OF RAJA ALI HAJI

Another well-known literary figure who has been regarded as an innovator of change and development in the Malay literary scene is Raja Ali Haji (1809-1870). Raja Ali Haji's works and contributions have attracted several studies and discussions.¹⁷ He was an important figure in the administration of Riau and a respected scholar. A number of his

¹⁷ See W.E.Maxwell 1890:173,212; J.J.Hollander 1882; Za'ba 1939:142-3; C.Skinner 1959; T.Iskandar 1964:533; Mohd Taib Osman 1964, 1965, 1976; Li Chuan Siu 1966; Zuber Usman 1966. Three academic studies on his works are by Mohd bin Anas 1958; Ismail bin Abdul Rahman 1959; and Virginia Matheson 1973.

works appeared in print, both in Dutch journals and local lithographs, and his reputation at the time was based on his contributions to theology, statecraft, grammar, genealogy, history, law and literature.¹⁸

Raja Ali Haji is more popular and recognised as a historian than a literary writer. His book, *Tuhfat al-Nafis* (1865), is highly acclaimed for its historical value and contribution. Matheson is of the opinion that the book has gone far beyond a mere tracing of the relationship between Malay and Bugis kings and those of Sumatra, and stands as a testament to the history of a great Kingdom, and it has also given all those interested in the history of the Indonesian archipelago a unique account of an age that is gone forever (Matheson and Andaya 1982:5-6).

Teuku Iskandar, even though he describes Raja Ali Haji as a “genuine historian” (*ahli sejarah tulen*) and “careful observer” (*pemerhati yang teliti*), and recognises his *Kitab Pengetahuan Bahasa* as the first attempt by a Malay to compile a dictionary (*kamus*), still regards him as a “classical author” (*pengarang yang klasik*). Using western influence as the basis of his judgement Teuku Iskandar writes:

“walaupun terdapat pembaharuan-pembaharuan dalam karangan-karangan Raja Ali Haji, ia tetap pengarang yang klasik. Ia bergaul dengan sarjana-sarjana dan pembesar Barat, tetapi pengaruh mereka terhadapnya tidaklah besar. Dalam hal ini Raja Ali Haji berbeza dengan Abdullah bin Abdul Kadir Munsyi, yang menurut R.Rolvink telah berada di perbatasan kebudayaan Timur dan Barat. Abdullah sudah keluar dari lingkungan masyarakatnya sendiri, biarpun begitu belum pula ia dengan seluruhnya berada dalam

¹⁸ See Matheson and Andaya (1982), *The precious gift (Tuhfat al-Nafis)*, an annotated translation, ‘introduction’, pp.5 and 6.

lingkungan kebudayaan Barat. Raja Ali Haji dapat menghargai nilai-nilai peradapan Barat, akan tetapi nilai-nilai ini tidak cocok dalam kebudayaan Melayu dan dengan keras mempertahankan nilai-nilainya.” (Mohd Daud Mohamad 1987:139)

Teuku Iskandar equates westernisation with modernisation. Raja Ali Haji is called a “classical author” because he strongly preserved and defended Malay values and culture. Even though he realises that Raja Ali Haji did produce innovative work and had shown an understanding and appreciation of the western way of life, since he did not adopt it fully as Abdullah did, he simply could not be a modern author.

Mohd Taib Osman (1964) later reinforces Teuku Iskandar’s views on Raja Ali Haji, especially with regard to his concept of history and linguistic involvement. He analysed *Tuhfat al-Nafis* to determine its relation and importance to Malay historiography. Taib illustrates the innovative elements found in the writing, such as the use of dates (*tarikh*) in illustrating events, the effective utilisation of various sources of information, the lack of mythic and magical (*dongengan*) elements and the emphasis on *salasilah* (genealogy), all of which make it more systematic and objective than earlier writings. According to him, the use of *tarikh*, represents a new type of “world view” of the Malay concept of time and historiography (Mohd Taib Osman 1964:148). Despite his great achievements mentioned above, Taib thinks his work still possesses traditional motives and traits and continues the tradition of Malay historiography. Raja Ali Haji, according to him, even tried to follow closely the tradition of *Sejarah Melayu* for as long as this fell within the limit of acceptance allowed by his more sophisticated readers. The innovations were not intended, but rather were results of the changes and differences in his educational background and way of life.

Following Teuku Iskandar's basis of analysis, Taib then compared him to Abdullah:

"Berbanding dengan Abdullah yang hidup dalam wilayah yang diperintah oleh orang-orang Barat, iaitu Melaka dan di Singapura, Raja Ali Haji hidup dalam lingkungan istana Melayu. Sebenarnya kedua tokoh pujangga Melayu itu bolehlah diambil sebagai lambang zaman itu, masing-masing melambangkan dua alam Melayu yang wujud dalam masa yang sama. Abdullah melambangkan alam Melayu yang kemudiannya menerima peradapan Barat, iaitu satu pengaruh yang kemudiannya menukar corak peradapan di Alam Melayu ini. Raja Ali Haji pula mewakili alam traditional Melayu yang masih mempertahankan kewujudannya di ambang zaman baru yang dibawa oleh peradapan Barat. Sungguh menarik sekali halnya kerana Abdullah muncul sebagai penulis di S'pura atau Temasik adalah sebahagian daripada empayar Riau-Johor, iaitu, empayar yang telah ditegakkan oleh nenek moyang Raja Ali Haji yang merupakan percantuman darah dan keturunan Nusantara, iaitu Bugis dan Melayu. Boleh juga dikatakan bahawa kedua-dua tokoh kesusasteraan Melayu itu duduk diperbatasan antara sastera moden dan sastera transisi. Abdullah telah muncul sebagai pembaharu, walaupun masih mengekalkan unsur-unsur lama, tetapi Raja Ali Haji pula menyambung tradisi sastera Melayu lama, tetapi telah membawa beberapa unsur pembaharuan." (Mohd Taib Osman 1979:167)

Taib also sees western civilisation as representing modernisation. Since Abdullah was "westernised and symbolized the new Malay world or civilisation", he was therefore regarded as an innovator of modern literature. On the other hand, no matter how innovative Raja Ali Haji's works, because he was living within the istana circle and seemed to be not greatly influenced by western civilization, could only be a "classical" author.

Thus, Taib summarises Raja Ali Haji's contribution as follow:

"Sebagai keseluruhan, sumbangannya kepada persuratan Melayu adalah agak penting juga. Beliau bersifat kreatif dan agak sedar akan perubahan tentang tanda-tanda masa sebagai yang dapat dilihat dalam karya pelopornya tentang nahu, kamus dan pengendaliannya tentang pensejarahan. Tetapi beliau tidaklah mempunyai sifat pembaruan untuk menjadikan transisi daripada gaya dan adat-adat kebiasaan klasik kepada sesuatu yang baru hinggalah akhir-akhirnya beliau terus berdamping dengan tatanegara dari mana beliau dilahirkan dan di mana beliau membesar serta mengambil bahagian yang cergas di dalamnya. Justeru kerana itu, beliau bukanlah seorang tokoh transisi bila dibandingkan dengan Abdullah, kerana sebenarnya, beliau merupakan seorang 'pujangga' Melayu klasik yang akhir sekali." (Mohd Taib Osman 1979:170)

Raja Ali Haji's works have attracted some interesting discussions and since he lived at the same time and in the same historical period as Abdullah, naturally their works are constantly being compared by the scholars. However, as discussed above, Abdullah seems to be preferred choice of the two with respect to innovation.¹⁹

THE ROLE OF HAMZAH FANSURI

For some time, the notion of Abdullah as the "father of modern Malay literature" was well accepted, despite some reservations about his criticisms of the Malays from certain sectors of the Malay community who considered him as an "anglophile". It was only later, in the late 1960s, this notion began to be questioned and challenged by Muhammad Naquib al-

¹⁹ E.U.Kratz (1992) also analysed Raja Ali Haji's contribution. His view will be discussed later under the sub-heading 'The Role of Surat Keterangan Syeikh Jalaludin By Fakih Saghir'.

Attas. He disagreed with the concept of “modern” used by previous scholars in describing Abdullah and his works.

Al-Attas is of the opinion that the concept of “modern” is not fully studied and understood, and is yet to be clarified. Western scholars, according to him, apply the western concept of “modern” which can be traced back to the rationalistic, individualistic and internationalistic spirit which began to emerge in the 14th century onwards, and which has always been understood as humanism. In the cultural history of the Western Christian peoples, it was conflict and opposition to the teaching of the church that brought about modern attitudes and concepts. Therefore, such concepts, according to him, cannot be applied to Muslims, for the concepts of rationalism, individualism and internationalism understood by Muslims have always been in harmony, not in conflict, with religion (al-Attas 1969:5,6-10,30-31).

Al-Attas states that with the coming and introduction of Islam amongst the Malays in the Archipelago, the Malay language, literature and *weltanschauung* underwent a revolutionary change from an aesthetic to a scientific one. The language developed in a new direction as a result of being employed as the vehicle for philosophical discourse in the Archipelago. The new direction is characterised by its terse, clear style and reveals a language capable of logical reasoning and scientific analysis. Hamzah Fansuri, according to Al-Attas, was the first man to write intellectually systematic Malay on subjects of a highly rationalistic order, and thus ought to be regarded as the “true father of modern Malay literature” (Al-Attas 1969:28-29).

"Hamzah Fansuri was the inventor and originator of the Malay syair. In the entire vista of Malay literature - including even the Indonesian literatures - he was unique. None rivalled him in originality and poetic genius; in Malay sufi literature none excelled the clarity and flowing simplicity of his prose which, nevertheless, reveals profound metaphysical insight in the sufi doctrines; none exceeded him in poetry, whether it be in terms of literary output or in terms of intellectual content. He was, as I have earlier shown, the first man to set forth in systematic writing the essential aspects of the sufi doctrines in Malay, and he not only impressed his influence upon certain historiographically important literary usages in Malay literature, but introduced as well new technical terminologies and concepts into the Malay language in general, and into Malay sufi literature in particular, having to do with theology, metaphysics and philosophy." (al-Attas 1970:178)

Al-Attas names Hamzah Fansuri, instead of Abdullah, as the "true father of modern Malay literature", basically for his rationalistic writings. *"Sebenarnya yang dikatakan 'moden' itu, dari segi falsafah sejarah, haruslah berdasarkan terutama sekali kepada sifat rasionalisma, yang mana mula-mula terdapat dalam bahasa Melayu dalam tulisan-tulisan Hamzah Fansuri."* (Al-Attas 1971:43)²⁰ Abdullah, according to him, emulated the style of the Malacca-centred *Sejarah Melayu* which only reflects traces of the old world view. Abdullah was to him the last exponent of the dying "Malaccan" style which was gradually being displaced by the new stream of literature brought about by Islam. As such he must not be regarded as "the father of modern Malay literature" (Al-Attas 1969:28-29). However, he does not reject outright Abdullah's contribution to the development of new

²⁰ For his study on Hamzah Fansuri see also Al-Attas 1966, 1971.

Malay literature. Abdullah, he points out, only continued Hamzah Fansuri's rationalistic spirit (Al-Attas 1969:44).

Al-Attas's view of Hamzah Fansuri as the "true father of the modern literature" was recently supported by Teeuw, but he adopts intrinsic criteria as the basis of his analysis and evaluation (Teeuw 1989:401-419). He regards Hamzah Fansuri not only as the pioneer of the new Malay poetry but also of Indonesian poetry. Teeuw describes several "modern" elements found in Hamzah's *syairs*: his individualism, inner self expression, creative use of language and its ambiguity.

On Hamzah's individualism, he explains that *"Hamzah Fansuri dengan jelas dan tegas mengemukakan dirinya sebagai pengarang syairnya, tidak hanya dalam sebuah kolofon atau pascakata, tetapi di dalam teks puisinya; dia sendiri menterpadukan namanya dan keperibadiannya dalam puisinya. Dengan demikian Hamzah Fansuri melambangkan era baru dalam sastra, sebagai ungkapan seorang individu yang memanifestasikan keperibadiannya secara sadar dalam bentuk puisi. Inilah justru ciri khas kemodenan, juga dalam sejarah sastra di Eropah. Seakan-akan dia menonjolkan hakciptanya secara eksplisit."* (Teeuw 1989:410)

Hamzah Fansuri's second innovation, according to Teeuw, is his creation of a new literary form as an expression of his inner self by using Persian literary models. *"Hamzah Fansuri menciptakan bentuk puisi baru untuk mengungkapkan 'gerak sukma'nya...tanda kebutuhan batin yang baru untuk mengekspresikan diri secara baru, berbeda dengan tokoh atau tradisi pendahuluannya."* (Teeuw 1989:411)

Teeuw describes Hamzah Fansuri's works as: "*individual, modern, kaya akan kreativitas dan inventivitas bahasa...jelaslah rimanya sangat kuat, sehingga bunyi rima ini cukup kaya dan efektif...*" (Teeuw 1989:412) *Hamzah tidak menterjemahkan bahan-bahan Arab, melainkan mengintegrasikannya ke dalam syair yang diciptakannya, sehingga terjadi sebuah teks yang tidak hanya bersifat puitis, tetapi juga sangat argumentatif dan seakan-akan terbukti kebenarannya dari dalam, secara intrinsik* (Teeuw 1989:413) *pemakaian bahasa kesusasteraan yang dapat kita amati dalam karya syairnya membenarkan penyair abad ke-16 ini menerima gelar 'Sang Pemula Puisi Indonesia' "* (Teeuw 1989:414)

Another "modern" feature in Hamzah's writing highlighted by Teeuw is the ambiguity of his work. "*Puisinya penuh ambiguitas, ketaksaan. Pembaca selalu dikian-kemarikan antara kenyataan dan khayalan, antara kebenaran dan imajinasi, antara syariat dan makrifat, antara kesejarahan atau historisitas dan universalitas, antara arti (meaning) dan makna (significance), antara mimesis dan semiosis, kalau mahu dipakai istilah ilmu sastra Barat moden.*" (Teeuw 1989:418)

Hamzah Fansuri's poetic genius, according to Teeuw, is not only because his writings consist of such "modern" features, but also they help his reader to discover his own self as "modern" man. "*Lewat seluk-beluk dan teka-teki puisi Hamzah Fansuri, lewat imajinasinya yang berliku-liku dan penuh keghaiban akhirnya kita menemukan diri kita sendiri selaku manusia moden dalam pencarian Tuhan, pencarian al-Haqq, pencarian kebenaran yang tidak kunjung berakhir....dalam kemodenan puisinya sebagai pelopor dan pemula puisi Indonesia kita dapat mengenal jati diri dan permasalahan kita sendiri selaku manusia moden.*" (Teeuw 1989:418)

THE ROLE OF MOHAMED SALLEH BIN PERANG

Abdullah's "pioneering status" is continuously challenged by scholars as a result of new reinterpretations of his works and new discoveries of literary works of other writers. Amin Sweeney uses the concepts of the "implied author" (the author's "second self") and "postulated reader" based on Wayne Booth's *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (1961).

According to Booth, an author, as rhetorician, not only creates an image of himself, but also one of his reader, which may be termed the "postulated reader", in whom he must arouse an appetite for what he has to say, and then satisfy it. An author finds that some of the beliefs on which a full appreciation on his work depends come ready-made, fully accepted by the postulated reader as he comes to the book, and some must be implanted and reinforced (Booth 1961:177). Thus from the author's viewpoint, a successful reading of his book must eliminate all distance between the essential norms of the implied author and the norms of the postulated readers and to achieve this, he must initially establish common ground between them (Booth 1961:157).

Sweeney has applied Booth's concepts to interpret and evaluate Abdullah's works and the writings of Mohd Salleh bin Perang, *Tarikh Datuk Bentara Luar Johor (DBLJ)*.²¹ Amin Sweeney regards the *Tarikh DBLJ* as a very important piece of work in its historical and literary aspects. This book, according to him, represents a new development in Malay literature, as it is a long step from the impersonal style of the traditional Malay literature where the function of literature is essentially to confirm the traditional values of society.

²¹ See Amin Sweeney 1980. The book presents a translation and study on *the Tarikh Datuk Bentara Luar Johor*, Mohd Salleh bin Perang (1841-1915), one of the chief pioneers of the modern state of Johore. The *Tarikh* consists of 3 autobiographical writings, written at different times and published after Salleh's death by Mohamed bin Haji Alias, in 1928, printed by al-Attas Press, Johor Baru, in Jawi.

According to him, in such a milieu, the idea of recounting one's own life story would have been a novel one. Amin Sweeney then compares Abdullah's writing, which is also autobiographical, using the model.

"In his writing, Abdullah's postulated audience was European, not Malay. The images he created of himself both as author and as protagonist were designed to gain acceptance from that audience. By eliminating the distance between the norms of his implied author and those of his postulated European audience, he only widened the gap between the second self and the Malays- remembering that he himself was only Malay in the sense of being a Muslim." (Sweeney 1980b:16)

"Abdullah's real intention was not to reform the Malays with his writing. Had such been his intention, he would have attempted to established common ground with his Malay readers, from which to win them over to his point of view. On the contrary, his often savage criticism is rather designed to create an ethos for himself which will impress his European audience. Further more, if he had been a Malay writing for Malays, he would have needed to devote considerable effort to preparing his audience for the novel idea of autobiography. However, he is writing his account in response to a request from a European and, though he models his style on that of traditional Malay literature, the conventional opening formula of humility he uses would sound hollow to a Malay audience. Such formulas were used in classical Malay to create an impersonal ethos for the implied author. In the context of Abdullah's autobiographical writing, however, where the ethos is to be anything but impersonal, this opening would have a jarring effect on Malay reader, particularly as it

becomes apparent almost immediately that Malay humility is not one of the implied author's qualities." (Sweeney 1980b:17)

When Amin Sweeney applies the same criterion of "audience postulation" to Salleh's work, he finds that: "*The distinctive feature of Salleh's writing is that he was the first Malay author to prepare his audience for the novel idea of autobiography, so that the postulated reader is one that a Malay is willing to become.*" (Sweeney 1980b:18). Therefore he advances "*the view that the Tarikh has a Malay authorial ethos and a Malay implied audience, whereas Abdullah does not adopt a Malay literary ethos, and he attempts to postulate a European audience.*" (Sweeney 1990:28). Based on this pretext, Amin Sweeney concludes that "*although Abdullah's Hikayat is the first work containing autobiographical material in Malay, Salleh's writing is the first Malay autobiography.*" (Sweeney 1980b:18).

THE ROLE OF SURAT KETERANGAN SYEIKH JALALUDDIN BY FAKIH SAGHIR

Kratz, on the other hand, finds that the model is rather antagonistic and unsuitable for evaluating Abdullah's works and contributions. Instead, he suggests that "*rather than seeing Abdullah and his work in a neat and antagonistic framework of Malay and non-Malay ethos, of European and Malay patronage, of differences in the postulated readership, his was a different attempt within the Malay tradition to grapple with the challenges courtly literature increasingly had to face and to provide a medium of expression for a newly emerging type of Malay elite, working and living outside the courts in a*

different kind of society which had begun to be exposed more strongly to western ways."

(Kratz 1992c:32).

How successful was Abdullah's attempt to fulfill the challenge of the new society and to provide a new or "modern" medium of expression ? Kratz analyses it as follow:

"Indeed, his work is important and worth studying for several reasons which concern his subject matter, form, language and style, but so far nobody has really demonstrated that Abdullah created a literary tradition and all we can conclude at the moment and present to students is the exceptional nature of Abdullah's personality and work. But Abdullah was not the only one who responded to the challenges of the 19th century. Amin Sweeney (1980) has shown that there were others who in a far more natural and evolutionary way have attempted to change the nature of traditional literature and it would be interesting to see how one might possibly be able to link modern developments to these changes. Raja Ali Haji could be mentioned here as well, as an example for the tremendous movements that took place in traditional literature during that time and the different responses. Yet in both cases, Abdullah and Raja Ali Haji, it would seem that despite the innovative changes made to the nature of traditional literature, it and its normative poetics were not the appropriate means with which to respond creatively to the challenges of the day." (Kratz 1991:197-198)

Though Kratz acknowledges Abdullah's linguistic and thematic innovations, he still regards his work as the exception rather than the rule (Kratz 1979:6). He finds Abdullah too enigmatic a figure, and his style rather alienated, and thus he remains a unique figure in the history of Malay literature and culture (Kratz 1992c:36-37).

Kratz then presents to us another piece of writing, *Surat Keterangan Syekh Jalaluddin*, an autobiographical text written by one Fakih Saghir about the beginning of the Paderi War in West Sumatra. This text exists in two manuscripts, one which was copied in 1829 in Batavia and the other which was written after 1821. Kratz suspects that it was written at a European request, yet it maintains a Malay ethos in expression and its aspirations. According to him, Fakih Saghir, presented to the Malay public the novel form of the autobiography in a very Malay way, years before Abdullah and even more years before Mohamed Salleh (Kratz 1992c:36).

Therefore, with this discovery, Kratz not only presents to us another “innovative” text to be seriously considered in our discussion of new Malay literature, he also has proven to us that Abdullah’s work can be approached differently from Sweeney’s approach, and that we cannot make any conclusive statement about the 19th century literature until more texts are studied.

Discussions on the origins of new Malay literature are not confined to literary figures or individual writers. Some scholars also have looked for external factors which might have influenced the literary scene, and have led to the cultivation and development of new creative forces. One factor which has been pointed out as a decisive element in transforming Malay literature from its traditional nature into “modern” writing is the printing press.

THE ROLE OF THE PRINTING PRESS

Ismail Hussein was among the first to have raised this factor. He regards the printing press as the dividing line between old and new literature and therefore defines new Malay literature as: "*Sastera Melayu baru sebagai sastera yang tercipta selepas alat cetak.*" (Ismail Hussein 1974:1). To him the printing press not only brought about changes to Malay literature, but revolutionized it. "*My simple dividing line is the printing press which had changed completely the role of the Malay literator, and has revolutionized the concept of Malay literature. Abdullah Munshi who the first person to write for printing press, who in his writings offered the first serious criticism against the feudal structure on which Malay literary culture had existed for centuries.*" (Ismail Hussein 1966:7). So Ismail Hussein sees the importance of Abdullah in this light simply because he was the first Malay writer who used the printing press (Ismail Hussein 1974:1).

How did the printing press revolutionize Malay literature? He explains the process as follows:

"Kita harus melihat sastera Melayu baru itu pertama-tamanya sebagai lanjutan daripada dan sebagai satu pertentangan dengan sastera Melayu lama. Sastera Melayu lama itu adalah satu sastra feudal, sastra oral, sastera masyarakat illiterate, sastra yang bukan komersial, sastra yang statis, sastra yang terbatas pencipta dan penontonnya, sastra kolektif, dan sastra kedaerahan. Perkembangan sastra Melayu baru selama satu abad itu memperlihatkan reaksi yang tegas terhadap sifat-sifat ini, memperlihatkan evolusi ke arah sastra yang anti-feudal, sastra print (atau tercetak), sastera orang-orang literate, sastra komersial, sastra dinamis, sastra yang terbuka, sastra yang individualistis dan sastra

kenasionalan. Faktor terpenting di dalam evolusi ini, malah dapat dikatakan revolusi, ialah alat cetak.” (Ismail Hussein 1974:5).

Ismail Hussein’s view of the role of the printing press in transforming Malay literature is also shared by Safian Hussain, Mohd Thani Ahmad and Johan Jaaffar, a group of researchers from Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.²² However, they do not see the changes brought by the printing press as revolutionary. New Malay literature, according to them, does not appear suddenly, but develops more naturally as a continuation of the old.

“Kesusasteraan Melayu baru bukan merupakan satu bentuk pernyataan yang muncul secara mendadak tetapi lebih merupakan satu persambungan dari bentuk-bentuk pernyataan yang telah sedia wujud di dalam masyarakat Melayu sebelumnya. Maka itu kelahiran kesusasteraan Melayu baru bukanlah sama sekali dirangsangkan oleh kecenderungan untuk menjelmakan pembaruan dalam pengucapan sastera. Ia tidak juga merupakan akibat langsung dari satu macam kesedaran sosio-budaya atau secara sedar timbul dari kesedaran baru terhadap proses penciptaan.” (Safian Hussain et.al 1981:1).

The development of new Malay literature as part of a literary continuity, according to them, is part of the rising collective consciousness in values, mentality and way of life of the Malays as a result of their changing pattern of life under western colonialism.

²² See Safian Hussain, Mohd Thani Ahmad and Johan Jaaffar 1981. This book is an attempt by DBP to fulfill the need to produce an accountable book on the history of Malay literature (refer ‘Prakata’, p.vii)

“Perubahan situasi di awal zaman penjajahan Barat inilah yang sebenarnya merupakan katalisator pada perkembangan kesusasteraan Melayu baru yang lebih realistik, lebih individualistik, lebih komersial dan lebih luas penyibarannya. Ia kini menjadi media pengucapan setiap masyarakat, asal saja boleh membaca, dan untuk sekian lama ia menjadi medan luahan perasaan, percanggahan ide, serta serangan dan kritikan yang berani dan terus terang.

Sama ada disetujui atau tidak kemunculan media massa berupa akhbar dan majalah di penghujung abad ke -19 yang dimungkinkan oleh alat cetak ciptaan Barat adalah babak bermulanya kesusasteraan Melayu baru dalam ertikata yang sebenarnya.” (Safian Hussain et.al 1981:3).

This collective phenomenon, according to them, is more significant for the development of new Malay literature and culture than the isolated artistic geniuses and talents of Abdullah Munshi and Hamzah Fansuri:

“Hamzah Fansuri lebih merupakan seorang yang cuba membawa pembaharuan kerohanian, yang mengajak kita bukan sekadar menurut apa yang tersurat tetapi mencari ilmu memahami jiwa, mencintai Tuhan dan menghapuskan khurafat. Beliau menuntut daya pemikiran intelek dan baginya manusia adalah makhluk mulia yang harus mengenal diri sebelum mengenal Tuhannya. Sayangnya pembaharuan ide yang seharusnya satu tentangan terhadap nilai-nilai ortodoks itu tidak dapat diperkembangkan sebaik mungkin kerana serangan dari golongan yang tidak menyenangkannya. Pada akhirnya Hamzah tenggelam dalam lipatan sejarah walaupun sebenarnya beliau menjadi pemuka pada satu

pemikiran yang baru seperti yang terserlah di dalam puisi-puisi mistik yang amat bernilai tinggi itu.” (Safian Hussain et.al 1981:1-2).

“Abdullah Munshi menghasilkan karya-karya yang bertolak dari dirinya. Beliau memperlihatkan satu sifat keindividuan yang hampir-hampir tidak ditemui di dalam karya-karya kesusasteraan klasik.” (Safian Hussain et.al 1981:2).

“Hamzah dan Abdullah masing-masing memperlihatkan keunggulan yang tersendiri. Masing-masing menjadi pemuka, melontarkan ide atau kritikan baru yang malah dicurigai pada zamannya. Pemikiran dari faham wujudiyah Hamzah menjadi mangsa tekanan golongan ortodoks di Aceh dalam abad ke -17 itu, terutamanya dari Sheikh Nuruddin al-Raniri. Sementara Abdullah, tidak memberikan sebarang kesan pada pemikiran masyarakat Melayu pada zamannya ...Hamzah muncul di dalam masyarakat klasik itu sendirian, tanpa naungan dan tersisih.” (Safian Hussain et.al 1981:2-3).

In their attempt to synthesize earlier notions or opinions on the origins of new Malay literature, these researchers have drawn this conclusion:

“Dalam keseluruhan perkembangan kesusasteraan Melayu baru ini dapat kita melihat sifat kontinuitinya sebagai satu proses yang amat bersahaja iaitu bermula dari bibit-bibit pembaharuan dari segi ide yang dibawa oleh Hamzah Fansuri dan Abdullah Munshi kepada satu perkembangan yang lebih menonjol, lebih rancak dan bererti sejak bermulanya akhbar Melayu yang pertama 103 tahun yang lalu. Sifat kontinuiti yang diselang-selikan oleh perubahan pembaharuan adalah satu ciri yang menarik untuk diteliti dalam perkembangan kesusasteraan Melayu baru.” (Safian Hussain et.al 1981:28).

Proudfoot, in his "provisional account of early Malay printed books published in Singapore and Malaysia", has made an interesting analysis of the application of technology, the printing press, to the craft of writing in the Malay language. The introduction and spread of technology, in the form of print culture, produced a new type of cultural commodity, typographically-printed texts of new literature. According to him, the new literature was not only created by transforming old texts, but new texts were also created especially for print. He then gives several features or principal marks of the new literature: the prominence of the author as a named individual, the interest in contemporary reportage, and the preference for prose. These to him were linked to a complex of changes, mainly in print which supplied the preconditions for the emergence of modern literature.

"An understanding of these developments shows how misleading the notion of 'transitional' Malay literature can be when it attempts to draw line from classical to modern prose. The idea that there is a 'transitional' Malay literature, in which Abdullah bin Abd.Kadir figures prominently, and which bridges the stylistic gulf between classical and modern prose can be seen to be a vast simplification of the cross-currents and turbulence surrounding the arrival of print. Rather it is now clear that the rise to prominence of the author, the interest in contemporary reportage, and preference for prose are all linked to a complex of changes, at the heart of which lies print, and specifically typography. Together they supply the preconditions for the emergence of modern 'creative' prose fiction in the 1920s." (Proudfoot 1992:52).

The genesis of new literature has also become the concern of Indonesian scholars. Actually both contemporary Malay and Indonesian literature are very much interrelated,

and it is difficult to separate the two, especially when we discuss the role and influence of literary figures such as Abdullah Munsyi and Hamzah Fansuri. It is interesting to see the Indonesian interpretation of the problem, manifesting common concerns among scholars of both Malay and Indonesian studies as well the specific additional issues raised in the discussions about literature in Indonesia.

THE INDONESIAN INTERPRETATION OF THE ORIGIN OF THE NEW LITERATURE

The problems of origins and antecedents of new Indonesian literature seem to be as complex as, if not more than, its Malay counterpart and currently it is being seriously debated. There are various views written on this issue by different groups of scholars or writers, from Indonesia and elsewhere.²³

The Role of Abdullah bin Abdul Kadir Munsyi

The first school of thought also considers Abdullah Munsyi the “forerunner” of “modern” Indonesian literature. This view is held by Hooykaas, Johns, Armijn Pane, Zuber Usman, B.Simorangkir Simanjuntak, Gazali Dunia, Soeparlan D.S. and Nursinah S. Generally they see his innovations - in his new “individualistic” spirit, realistic themes, language and form of writing initiating the birth of new Indonesian literature.²⁴

However, there is another group of scholars or writers such as Teeuw, Liang Liji, B.P.Situmorang and Boejoeng Saleh, who only regard Abdullah as the last great writer of traditional literature, or at the most his writings are regarded as “transitional” between the

²³ This problem was clearly discussed by Bakri Siregar 1980:32-48; and Liang Liji 1987:3-32.

²⁴ See also Soeparlan D.S., *Rangkuman Kesusasteraan Indonesia*. n.d.

old and the new literature.²⁵ Abdullah, according to one view, only “renovated” traditional literature but did not “innovate” it (A.Bakar Hamid 1979:4).

The Western (Dutch) Influence

The second school of thought is that “modern” Indonesian literature was born in the 1920s only with the support of the Dutch colonial institution, Volkslectuur or Balai Pustaka. This notion was initially raised by Teeuw in *Voltooid Voorspel* (1950), and was later reinforced in his books, *Pokok dan Tokoh 1* (1952) and *Modern Indonesian Literature* (1967). Teeuw identifies Western (Dutch) influences as the motivating forces behind the development of new literary expressions. He points out that the poems of Muhammad Yamin were published in Jong Sumatra in 1920-22 as “the first expressions of a modern Indonesian literature” (Teeuw 1967:10). He also mentions another new literary expression in the form of the novel, *Siti Nurbaya* written by Marah Rusli, and tries to relate it to the contribution of Balai Pustaka (Teeuw 1967:13).

Teeuw even explains that the new Indonesian writers of Pudjangga Baru period (1933-1942) were very much inspired and influenced by Dutch writers, the *Tachtigers* (the generation of 1880) (1967:41-42). Teeuw’s concept is very popular and is supported by other scholars/writers such as Johns (1963), Zuber Usman (1966), Umar Junus (1974), Nugroho Notosusanto (1963), H.B.Jassin (1962:245), Boejoeng Saleh (1956), Azis Safiudin, M.Balfas and Pamusuk Eneste (1988).

²⁵ See A. Teeuw 1979; Liang Liji 1980: 26-27; Boejoeng Saleh 1956:13.



Johns attempts to distinguish between traditional and “modern” literatures and finds that “modern” literature consists of an author’s personal point of view, and gives an individual critique and analysis of life around him.²⁶ He describes several contributions of Dutch Colonialism to Indonesian society, which became prerequisites for the formation of the new Indonesian literature (Johns 1979:32).

Even though Johns regards Abdullah as a “pioneer”, as his autobiography is the work of an individual, presenting a personal point of view, and is one of the earliest expressions in the Indonesian world of the encounter between East and West, he writes that Abdullah only foreshadowed and illustrated a development of literary and social consciousness which was only to become manifest in Indonesia some fifty years later (1979:20). Therefore according to him, the true modern development of Indonesian literature only came about after the formation of Balai Pustaka. Like Teeuw, he also applies the Western concept of “individualism” to Indonesian literature, and is of the opinion that “modern” Indonesian literature emerged as a result of its contact with the Western world.

Indonesian National Consciousness

H.B.Jassin also adopts “individualism” as a criterion of modern literature as suggested before. However, he relates it to a wider perspective of consciousness: national consciousness. He gives the year 1900 as the dividing line between old and new literatures, and regards that date as the beginning of individual consciousness which led to development of national consciousness.

²⁶ See A.H.Johns 1979:31. For further discussions on his interpretation and application of the concept of ‘Individualism’ to traditional and modern Malay and Indonesian literature, refer to his article “From Caricature and Vignette To Ambivalence and Angst” in Wang Gungwu 1975:29-54.

"Dalam kesusasteraan Indonesia dibedakan kesusasteraan Melayu lama dan kesusasteraan Indonesia moden. Batas waktu antara keduanya, tahun 1900, merupakan permulaan kesadaran individu yang akan bermuara pada kesedaran kebangsaan. Bahasa kesusasteraan Melayu lama, iaitu bahasa yang dipakai dalam buku Sejarah Melayu, hikayat, syair dan pantun lama. Pun hikayat Abdullah bin Abdul Kadir Munsyi, meskipun persoalannya mulai moden, masih mempunyai gaya lama yang membedakannya dari gaya bahasa yang dipergunakan di Indonesia sesudah tahun 1900." (Jassin 1967:22). He compares the old and new literatures, and finds differences in their content and language (Jassin 1967:12-13).

Ajip Rosidi also agrees with the date put forward by H.B.Jassin. In his attempt to write a "standard" book on the history of Indonesian literature, he gives the period of 1900 to 1945 as the period of genesis (*period kelahiran*). He raises several factors which influenced early developments of Indonesian literature. One important factor was the role of newspapers and journalists in producing a new type of writing during the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Different dates of birth of the new Indonesian literature are given by other scholars/writers. Umar Junus is of the opinion that new Indonesian literature began in 1921 and 1922, when the new genre of the novel (*roman*) was introduced by Merari Siregar with the publication of his novel, *Azab dan Sengsara* (1921) and Marah Rusli with his novel, *Siti Nurbaya* (1922) (Umar Junus 1974:4). Nugroho Notosusanto picks the year 1908 because to him, Indonesian national consciousness began to arise and was officially recognised then (Nugroho Notosusanto 1963:205).

The use of “national consciousness” as a criterion of “modern literature” is also raised by Bakri Siregar. He also tries to relate the birth of new Indonesian literature to the birth of Indonesian national consciousness, but he advocates that new Indonesian literature “*dimulai dengan tradisi repolusioner yang dilaksanakan oleh Mas Marco Kartodikromo.*” (Bakri Siregar 1964). Ajip Rosidi, even though he agrees that national consciousness is an important determining factor, finds that this consciousness only arose in literary history in 1920 and 1921, when the magazine of **Jong Sumatra** published the poetry of Mohd Yamin, Md Hatta, Sanusi Pane and others (Ajip Rosidi 1964:7). Slametmulyana, on the other hand, considers that the new literature was born in 1945, only with the official formation of Indonesia as an independent nation (Slametmulyana 1953:2). Pramoedya Ananta Tur expresses his view that Indonesian literature began in 1910 when the *Sarekat Islam*, which was formed in 1909, came out with a national programme in literature (Pramoedya 1964).

The Role of The Indonesian Dutch and Peranakan Chinese

Another school of thought highlights the roles and contributions of the Dutch, the Eurasian (Indo) group and Indonesian Chinese (Peranakan Chinese) in the early development of the new Indonesian literature. The writings of G.Francis, *Nyai Dasima* (1896) and Max Havellaar by Multatuli (Edward Dowes Dekker) are mentioned by Ajip Rosidi, H.B.Jassin and Pramoedya, as important examples of contribution of the former. Pramoedya has gathered in an anthology seven works written by the Indo-group and the Peranakan Chinese, which he regards as representing a new kind of writing for the self-expression of the authors and their pioneering, new, style of thinking.

"Tulisan-tulisan dalam anthology ini dipilih yang mengandung penglihatan baru atas dunia, sebagai akibat dari arus pemikiran baru, semata atas kemauan sendiri, atas nama sendiri dan dengan tanggungjawab sendiri. Tidak mengherankan bila mereka ditulis golongan menengah kota sebagai akibat atau produk perkembangan dan pertumbuhan ekonomi perdagangan. Sekalipun kebebasan berpikir dan menyatakan pendapat dan perasaan dalam batas-batas telah tersedia namun pada tingkat pertama tak dapat diharapkan terlalu banyak akan lahirnya kesadaran budaya. Para penulis pada umumnya masih 'diperbudak' oleh materi tulisan, suatu hal yang mengganggu integritas mereka sebagai penulis. Walaupun demikian mereka sudah berfaal sebagai perintis pemikiran baru, telah memandang dan menganggap serta menghampiri dunia dengan cara baru. Ciri daripada semua itu dalam penulisan, sekali pun masih terasa lemah, adalah pernyataan diri pribadi (self expressi), yang tidak terdapat dalam sastra tradisional-konvensional lama." (Pramoedya 1982:11-12).

Pramoedya has raised the question of the role of these ethnic group writers in producing literature based on multi-racial themes involving natives and immigrants. He calls these writings "*sastra assimilatif atau sastra pra-Indonesia*". However there was no response to or interest in the argument raised at the time (Pramoedya 1964:13-14).

The involvement in and contribution of the Peranakan Chinese to Indonesian literature was initially raised by Nio Joe Lan in the 1930s. Takdir Alisjahbana (1934) discussed the position of the Peranakan Chinese language within the Malay language context of Indonesia and compared it to the Indonesian language (1957:55-61). This was

followed by Ajip Rosidi (1969), Watson (1971), John Kwee (1977), Faizah Soenoto (1979), Sykorsky (1980), Sumardjo (1981) and Salmon (1981 and 1987) and Kratz (1992).

It was Salmon's book which stirred strong interest and responses.²⁷ With her impressive documentation and listing of 3005 titles of works produced by the Peranakan Chinese, Salmon has shown the importance of Peranakan Malay literature which forms an essential link in the chain of new Indonesian literary developments. Her academic work has succeeded in making the writings of the Peranakan Chinese a major agenda in the current discussions among scholars of Indonesian studies, and it has also opened up a new field of studies, and has even forced some scholars, such as Teeuw, to reevaluate and reconsider their earlier judgements and opinions on the subject.²⁸

So far we have discussed the various schools of thought and differences in opinion on the new literature and its literary "pioneers". There are a few attempts to study the subject and the concept of modernity in Malay literature. It is necessary to analyse these studies, which are discussed as follows.

²⁷ At least 3 major seminars were held to discuss the role of Chinese Peranakan: *Table Ronde Surla Littérature Indonésienne vue sous son angle Sino-Malais*, held by de l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Paris, 14-15 Mei 1990; *The symposium on The Role of the Indonesian Chinese in Shaping Modern Indonesian Life*, held by the Cornell University of Ithaca, USA in 1990; and *Seminar Bahasa dan Sastra Melayu Tionghua*, held in the Faculty of Letters, University of Indonesia, Depok Indonesia, 11-12 Feb 1992.

²⁸ A. Teeuw in his review of Salmon's book wrote:
"Mrs. Salmon's book not only opens up new field of studies. It also forces those working in related fields, including the present reviewer, into an agonizing reappraisal of some basic concepts they have been working with. The all too loosely used and imprecisely defined expression Modern Indonesian Literature has been called into question by the author..." (1984:538).
 Following her books, there have been several other articles written which discuss the subject of Peranakan Chinese literature and reevaluate the role of *Balai Pustaka*. See Doris Jedamski 1992:23-45; Liang Liji 1987a:3-32.; 1987b:165-179.

STUDIES OF THE CONCEPT OF MODERNITY IN MALAY LITERATURE

Yahaya Ismail was the earliest critic who made an attempt to analyze the concepts of modern literature raised by Al-Attas and Ismail. In 1973, he rejected both Ismail's and Al-Attas's approaches "*as looking at the beginning of modern Malay literature from the extrinsic point of view.*" (Yahaya Ismail 1973:102). Yahaya stresses the importance of the intrinsic approach in solving confusion in determining new genres in Malay literature and he believes that the extrinsic approach is not a true literary study (*'bukan suatu studi kesusasteraan yang sebenarnya'*) (Yahaya Ismail 1973:104).

He then defines a true literary study as follows:

"Pada pandangan saya studi kesusasteraan sebenarnya memperlihatkan kedua aspek- isi dan bentuk- sebagai bagian yang integral. Hanya dengan jalan demikian seseorang bisa melihat karya sastra dengan lebih terbuka lagi, dan dapat menikmati karya sastra sebagai karya sastra dan bukan substitusi ilmu pengetahuan-ilmu pengetahuan lainnya. konsepsi karya sastra albeit seni lainnya adalah konsepsi totalitas di mana unsur-unsur dalam pembentukan karya sastra itu dijamin sebaik-baiknya -bentuk dan isi sekaligus." (Yahaya Ismail 1973:105).

Yahaya then asks, if Ismail's literary theory and concept were true, why then did European literature in the field of the novel only come into being in the 19th century, and not at the time of Gutenberg, the inventor of the printing press who lived in the sixteenth century? And based on Ian Watt's *The Rise of the Novel*, he thinks it was only after Europe had undergone the Industrial Revolution and after the birth of the bourgeoisie that a new form and spirit in fiction writing known as the novel appeared. According to him, Abdullah

with his “realism” and “individualism” could only give birth to a memoir which is to be seen as representing the “genesis” in the development of the Malay novel. To him, the novel as a literary form was imported from Middle Eastern literature when Syed Sheikh Ahmad Al-Hadi introduced *Hikayat Faridah Hanum* in 1925-1926; but the Malay writers were unable to master the form in a satisfactory manner till 1961 when A. Samad Said produced *Salina*. Yahaya considers *Salina* a total departure from “the form of traditional novel writing”. *Salina* for Yahya “is a true novel where characteristics of the novel and a good technique are visible”. He considers all pre-*Salina* prose works as “proto-novels” (Yahaya Ismail 1973:102-104).

He believes that literary works should be appreciated as literary works and not as a substitute for religious teachings. Al-Attas’s extrinsic approach, he says, narrows the range of the spiritual expression of the artist and denies the subjectivity of the man of letters and his importance as a creative writer. However extensive a writer’s experience and however profound his knowledge of the problems of man and life, he is unable to record all the experience of life. This individual limitation must be realised. Only with such a realisation or consciousness will a critic or scholar be able to see the world of literary activities sympathetically to gain a better perspective. To him, literary scholars should not approach literary works with preconceived philosophical ideas. So, Yahaya cannot accept Al-Attas’s opinion of Hamzah as the pioneer of modern Malay literature. Yahya thinks that we ought to ask whether Hamzah Fansuri consciously propounds his mystic thoughts as an artist or as a mystic? As Hamzah Fansuri has expressed Islamic thoughts in prose in religious tracts, his use of the *syair* is therefore meant as a sort of mnemonic. And even if we admit

that there are elements of Individualism in Hamzah, his forms of writing are traditional (Yahaya Ismail 1973:105-6).²⁹

Yahaya's criticism is rejected by Tan (1978). Tan regards Yahaya's response to Ismail and Al-Attas as illustration of "*a typical uncritical application of Western literary structuralism and formalism*" (1978:186). He disagrees with Yahaya's interpretation of modernity based on Western literary forms. Tan states that Yahaya has also misconstrued Ismail and Al-Attas who never had in mind questions of "*the development of new genres in Malay literature*". Tan thinks that didactic or tendentious intent and the use of traditional poetic forms are not "un-modern" or "anti-modern". On the contrary, he adds that "*from a strictly formal point of view, Hamzah Fansuri's use of the syair form illustrates that in the hand of masters, it is possible to arrive at a fusion of both content and and a restrictive, 'traditional' form but to use a form which is often associated with trite expressions of 'collective' feelings and emotions and historical narratives as a vehicle for lofty philosophical thoughts.*" (Tan 1978:187).

Tan also criticizes Yahaya for not correctly understanding the actual history of the European novel or Egyptian writing, and only having a "hazy idea" of European history. He points out that the nineteenth century European novels evolved out of the novels of the Middle Ages and from the stories of even earlier times, and novels existed in cultures other than European; and he refers to Denis Saurat who writes that the oldest writings that can be called 'novel' come from Egypt (Tan 1978:187). Yahaya also "*post-dates Gutenberg and*

²⁹ Yahaya obviously has missed the main point raised by Al-Attas. Al-Attas, as discussed in the chapter 1, gives rationalism as a criterion of selection of Hamzah and not individualism as understood by Yahaya. This is also noted by Umar Junus in his discussion on Yahaya's seminar paper. See Umar Junus 1973:135-136.

the European printing machine by one century, the Industrial Revolution (in England) also by one century and the rise of the European bourgeoisie by several centuries.” (Tan 1978:189).

Tan’s study is important and significant for our discussion. His study can be considered as the most ‘comprehensive’ so far for its effort to see the issues and problems in a wider theoretical perspective (Tan 1978:160-215). Tan discusses the scholars’ conception or conceptualisation of modern or modernity in literature. He deals with periodisation in literary development as it is closely related to the concept of modernity in literature. He notes that scholars, local and foreign, have not been “*indulging in excessive and facile speculations, assumptions and pigeonholing as they do in periodising Indonesian literary development*” (Tan 1978:160).

He analyses the Indonesian solutions to the problem. He regards Ajip Rosidi as the first to systematically take the literary scholars and textbook writers to task for their slipshod “angkatanism” and periodisation (Tan 1978:161). Tan, however, finds that Ajip is extremely critical of local scholars and critics, particularly of Jassin, but seems to spare Teeuw, who Tan believes, is “*the source of uncritical local scholarship*” (Tan 1978:163). Teeuw, states Tan, is not fair to Bakri whom he accused of having given “*an unfair and one-sided picture of the role of Balai Pustaka as a primarily anti-nationalist instrument for the implementation of the so-called ethical colonial policy of the Dutch*” (Tan 1978:164). Teeuw himself is guilty of suppressing information in his Modern Indonesian Literature that *Salah Asuhan* was censored, and makes the unrealistic claim that Balai Pustaka consciously

aimed to promote the development of Indonesian language and literature. Tan suspects that Teeuw's reactions towards Bakri are partly personal and partly political (Tan 1978:165-6).

According to Tan, this debate on the periodisation of literature is a futile exercise. The literature is barely half a century old when other major literature of the world think, as far as periodisation is concerned, in terms of centuries. On the other hand, Tan finds that local Malay literary scholars are more aware of the continuity in literary and linguistic tradition, and therefore are "more sensible". They are preoccupied with determining the dividing line between modern and classical literature and the "paternity" of a literary phenomenon (i.e. who should be considered the "father" of modern Malay literature).

Tan is of the opinion that there is a clear distinction between the traditional or "classical" and the modern in character and genre, and there is almost complete agreement among scholars on this matter. He thinks of "classical" literature generally in terms of *syair*, *pantun*, *hikayat*, folktales, etc., and of a court and a folk or oral literature, and of "modern" literature in terms of short stories, *sajak*, novels etc. However, when it comes to deciding who stands at the dividing line between "classical" and modern literature, opinions of scholars differ.

Therefore, Tan tries to find out the criteria offered by local scholars to distinguish the modern from the classical literature. He identifies several criteria: script, the printing press and rationalism.

The first criterion is the use of script, raised by Taib Osman to differentiate both literatures. Modern Malay literature is the product of contact with the West, and the traditional literature is the literature written in the Perso-Arabic script known as Jawi. Tan writes that Taib was probably following Zuber Usman's script criterion, which had been criticised by Ajib as "lutju" (amusing). To Tan, the script criterion, if valid, would require that all non-West European literatures not using the Latin/Roman script (which would include also the Russian) to be changed to Rumi script if they want to be modern. This is not a scientific or rational proposition.

Tan also mentions Al-Attas, who is championing the revival of Jawi on the grounds that it helps to maintain the spiritual ties with Islam, Islamic culture and the Islamic world, and the source of its strength, unity and greatness. Tan, however, believes otherwise, and he sees some oversights by Naguib. He thinks that Rumi script is more efficient than Jawi. "*Memorandum On the Rumi Script*" by Usman Awang and Asraf, written on behalf of the Asas 50, in Tan's view, represents a well-reasoned, well-thought out, and, from the point of view of linguistics, a more acceptable plea for the replacement of Jawi by Rumi than the arguments given by Al-Attas.

However, Tan feels that the discussion of the problem of the script is necessary as it highlights one of the sources of the failure of local scholars to formulate more acceptable theories - the result of what he calls the operation of the "language veil". All this could have been avoided if language and script were seen as human artefacts, humanly determined. They do not determine modernity in literature. The use of Rumi or Jawi, according to him, rests on conscious choice in conformity with defined aims. He feels that

to achieve the modernisation aim of more rapid de-elitisation and democratisation and general literacy, Rumi is a more efficient tool.

The second criterion identified is the use of the printing press raised by Ismail Hussein. This criterion, according to Tan, also shares the same lack of some degree of general applicability as Taib's script criterion. He sees the use of the printing machine as the effect and not the cause of the modernisation process (Tan 1978:175). The final criterion discussed by Tan is "rationalism" which is advocated by Naquib. Compared to the two earlier criteria and other factors identified in differentiating traditional and modern literature, Tan is more in favour of this criterion.

"Although one may dispute some of the details in Syed Naguib's concept of modernity and modern literature, there is much that can be used as the basis for the building of a theory of modern literature. This is the first time, as far I am aware, when the question of what constitutes modern literature is discussed at a higher, conceptual level. All previous "theories" are descriptive: usually from the point of view of style, language, the identification of the author (as against the anonymity of classical works), of Abdullah's use of the familiar first person pronoun, "aku" ("I", implying that the use of a particular form of the personal pronoun decides "modernity" or "traditionality") and the presence of realism (as against the "khayalan" "fantasy" - the world of magic and make-believe of classical literature) and, of course, the "individualism" versus the "collectivism" of classical literature.... They are useless as tools for scholarly analysis and ineffective if not misleading as practical guides for writers." (Tan 1978:176-7).

Tan suggests that if the European literary experience is to be used as a guide, one needs to trace the modernisation process in European literary and cultural history in general from the waning of the Middle Ages and the beginning of the Renaissance. We should also learn from other Asian countries. Even the Chinese experience is relevant to our discussion of the concept of modern literature.

He then describes Wang Zhhefu's *A History of the New Literary Movement In China* (1933) which discusses similar problems. According to Tan, Wang has given the main emphasis of the character traits of modern literature: a democratic, humanistic, realistic and committed literature as against the exclusive, the aristocratic and the aesthetic (Tan 1978:190). He also provides us with Wang's conclusions on the traits of modern literature as following:

- i. "Newness" or modernity as newness in reevaluation and possessing the quality of being timeless;
- ii. Easily accessible to the majority;
- iii. Involves the study, creation and criticism of literary work as well as the introduction and translation of classics from Europe and America for comparison, reference and guidance.
- iv. External : refined language, artistic organisation and natural form
Content : genuine feelings, wealth of imagination, thoughts of the ages and the spirit of struggle against the old corrupt decadent society
- v. Themes : not confined to the life of the upper classes wealth of material from common lower classes
- vi. The forms : poetry, novel,drama,prose.

(Tan 1978:191)

Based on Al-Attas's criterion of "rationalism" and Wang's description of the traits of modern literature, Tan makes preliminary observations and tries to formulate a theory of modern literature. His preliminary observations are: firstly, any theory of modern literature or modernity in literature must be in congruence with theories of modernisation in general; and secondly, a viable theory does not merely describe but analyse, predict and guide future development. To put it another way, such a theory accounts for the past and the present and helps to shape the future (Tan 1978:202).

Tan gives two basic factors which motivate the modernising mind: rationalism and the striving towards progress. At the same time, he also identifies three essential facts and factors of the modernising mind: firstly, dynamism; secondly, rationalism; and thirdly, the idea of progress. He reiterates that 'rationalism' must be the basis for the theory of modernisation or of modern literature if it is to act as a guide for action. Other attributes or predictions of modernity or modernisation mentioned by Tan are: internationalism, individualism, the application of science and technology; the striving for a higher standard of living, enlightenment, social equality, and the conquest and utilisation of nature etc., which would be subsumed under rationalism (Tan 1978:202-3).

And finally, trying to position his theory of modernity of literature in the context of a general theory of modernisation, Tan concludes that to solve the basic problem in modernisation in the non-Western world, whether of culture, the arts and literature, or of society in general, we need to be liberated from westernisation and captive minds. The most potent weapon against this, according to him, is rationalism, the underlying basis of the modern attitude and the modernising spirit (Tan 1978:207).

CONCLUSIONS

Our analysis of the studies of the origins and development of new Malay literature and the concept of modernity has shown that there are various schools of thought and differences in opinions on the subject. The differences in various schools of thought above reflect the complexities of the subject and the diversity of perspectives and approaches adopted. This diversity of approaches and interpretations is manifested in the various methods or types of classification of literary development and the various literary figures identified as new literary innovators or pioneers. Generally, the main criteria used to identify and select the literary pioneers are: realism, individualism, rationalism, westernisation, form, the Malay ethos and postulated audience; the printing press, social contribution, national consciousness; ethnic and linguistic pluralism, and internationalism.

The differences in the above criteria also highlight some of the fundamental problems in the general study of Malay literature, which have been identified earlier by some scholars. Kratz has raised various key questions on the linguistic and literary definition of Malay literature, its origins and links with other literatures, its literary assessment and historical appraisal and its social and political contexts (Kratz 1991:191-209). Tickell reiterates the acuteness of the problems when he posits five key mythic structures within the writing of Indonesian literary history which have determined our understanding of the literature.³⁰ H. Chambert-Loir, who himself contributes to the study of the 19th century Malay literature, finds that recent studies and discussions on the literature by specialists in traditional literature have presented us with various implications: the limits

³⁰ These myths are: the myth of the modern, the myth of nationality and race, the myth of the decent, the myth of the a-political and the myth of the beautiful. These according to him are the results of a confluence of colonial and contemporary political imperatives which aim to maintain cultural control and negate anything that might threaten this cultural hegemony.
See Paul Tickell 1987:29-44.

and periodization of both the “traditional” and “modern” literatures have to be revised, the notion of “modernity” has to be questioned and the respective roles of various ethnic communities must be re-evaluated (Chambert-Loir 1991:87-114).³¹

The problem of ‘periodization’, as it is normally referred to to describe the literature in Indonesia, is only one of many problems which are facing the study of the literature. We need to find out the sources of influences for the new literature, the dynamics of its development, the nature and characters of the new literature and the proper creative genius(es) responsible for its origin and development.

The initial attempts by Yahaya Ismail (1973) and Tan (1978) to define the concept of modernity in the Malay literature, have given us an initial basis for consideration. The next step for us is to explore further the concepts of modernity formulated based on the Western and other Asian literary experiences. This will provide a good comparative perspective as well as helping us to determine valid criteria for literary modernity or at proper theory of modern literature for Malay literature.

³¹ For his other study on the subject see Henri Chambert-Loir 1984:44-72.

PART II

SOME COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVES

CHAPTER 2

THE CONCEPT OF "THE MODERN" OR MODERNITY IN LITERATURE

Introduction

The words "modern literature" or "the modern" are used widely and offhandedly but not always with a clear understanding of their meaning. Scholars such as Ellmann and Feidelson (1965:v-ix); Bradbury and McFarlane (1991:19-55), have stressed the elusiveness, obscurity and semantic instability of a term which is difficult to objectify and therefore "the modern" awaits definition in every case.

In normal usage, "the modern" or "modernity" refers to something that progresses in company with and at the speed of the years; the newest or most up to date. Hence, last year's modern is not this year's. In literary discourse, especially western literary tradition, the notion of "the modern" undergoes a semantic shift and as Lionel Trilling (1966) says, it can swing round in meaning until it is facing in the opposite direction. The term is used historically to locate a distinct phase which is ceasing or has ceased (e.g. Modernism, Neo-Modernism and Post-modernism) and to sum up a permanent modernising state of affairs and the state of mind and view of man it engenders. Yet, according to Bradbury, the word retains its force because of its association with a characteristic contemporary or historicist feeling that we live in totally novel times with a new consciousness and a fresh condition of the human mind (1991:22).

Before we can derive at a clear definition of "the modern" or even formulate a theory of modernity in literature which is applicable in the Malay literary context, let us first look into Western or European attempts to seek and to interpret the meaning of "the modern" in this intellectual and literary tradition. This will provide us with a strong basis for comparison, and at the same time enable us to understand some of the thinking and perspectives which have shaped the work of scholars of Malay and Indonesian literature discussed in chapter One.

GENERAL NOTIONS OF MODERNITY

The question of modernity has provoked a strong debate in the works of thinkers from Hegel onwards, through figures such as Heidegger, Habermas, Benjamin, Rorty and Lyotard.¹ To Hegel the Modern Age is characterised by the modes collective and individual consciousness in force during the period roughly 1500 until the French Revolution. He chose that period because of three major events that occurred then: the discovery of the New World, the Renaissance and the Reformation (1992:26).² Burckhardt, a great historian of the Renaissance, in his book, *Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy* (1860) further reinforced and gave the classical picture of the Renaissance as the birthtime of modern man.

According to him, Italy in the 14th and 15th centuries witnessed the emergence of a secular concept of the state, "the state as a work of art"; a stress on the development of the individual, i.e. a new attention to fame, glory, and the expression of personality; a discovery of the world based partly on the new voyages of exploration and partly on the

¹ For good accounts and analysis of this debate see Anthony J. Cascardi 1992.

² See Hegel's *Lectures on the philosophy of history*, 1900:5-11.

new work in natural science; and a discovery of man, involving a new psychology and a new concept of humanity. Thus, Burckhardt saw the importance of the Renaissance in cultivating a new concept of humanity based on secular and individual achievements.

Bronowski and Mazlish also take similar positions. To them it is natural to begin with the Renaissance, because then the modern concept of man as an individual, to be judged in himself, was formed (Bronowski and Mazlish 1963:16). They consider "modern man" not only as an individual who develops and achieves his unlimited potentiality through his "scientific" approach. They define the "scientific method" as the combination of the empirical and the rational make-up and find the successful combination of the two is prefigured in the person of Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519), the Renaissance artist and scientist.

"...he embodied and made real the Renaissance feeling that every individual carries in him unlimited potentialities, and requires, not an elaborate indoctrination or a lifetime of monastic devotion to one kind of work, but simply the proper environment in which, like a flower, he can unfold. It was this feeling of the way all human achievement is contained in the individual which was one main point in Renaissance belief." (Bronowski and Mazlish 1963:35).

"he was the prototype of the inveterate explorer of the unknown, the inspired man of genius who gazed in a new way at the microcosm within and the macrocosm without." (Bronowski and Mazlish 1963:38).

The Renaissance's notion of the "ideal man" as a "fully developed individual" was later extended by Rene Descartes (1596-1650), who is often called the "Father of Modern Philosophy". His important works are *The Discourse on Method* (1637) and *Meditations* (1641).³ He was educated as a Jesuit but found traditional theological teaching unsatisfactory. Turning to science and mathematics, he began a lifelong search for reliable evidence in his quest to distinguish truth from falsehood. Attacking philosophical problems, his prime concern was to establish criteria for defining reality. According to him the first essential in the search for truth is make a fresh start by refusing to believe anything that could not be decisively said to be true. He doubted all his previously held beliefs, including the evidence of his own senses. By stripping away all uncertainties he reached a basis of indubitable certainty on which he could build: that he existed. The very act of doubting proved that he was a thinking being. As he put it in a famous phrase in his second Meditation: **Cogito, ergo sum (I think, therefore I am)**. This method of doubt is his foundation of knowledge.

From this he preceeded to reconstruct the world, by considering the nature of material objects. His guiding principle: whatever is clearly and distinctly perceived must exist. Descartes developed the belief that human reason is capable of solving all intellectual problems, whether scientific or theological. Reason, which is understood as subjective self-consciousness and formulated in terms of a quasi-mathematical representation of the world, is important for man to rise above natural passions and control them with their own laws, and is therefore a means by which man may become "master and possessor" of the natural world. Even though by his method of self-criticism he rejected the wisdom of the Ancients,

³ See Lawrence Cunningham and John Reich 1982-2:197-198; and also Paul Edwards 1967-2:344-354.

he succeeded in proving the undeniable existence of a divine Being, not based on faith and divine manifestation or miracles, but by the reasoning power of human mind.

The position of transcendental reflection as established in the philosophy of Descartes, according to Heidegger, marks the transformation of the world from an embracing cosmos into an objective representation, picture or "view".

"The newness in this event by no means consists in the fact that now the position of man...is entirely different one in contrast to that medieval and ancient man. What is decisive is that man himself expressly takes up this position as one constituted by himself, that he intentionally maintains it as that taken up by himself, and that he makes it secure as the solid footing for possible development in humanity." (Cascardi 1992:126).

The Cartesian system or model of self-consciousness shifted the position of man to become the measure and centre of beings, therefore leading to the birth of modern philosophy and the history of modernity. According to Hegel, Descartes' insistence on subjectivity brought about a "new epoch in Philosophy" and he interpreted Descartes as the real forerunner of modern thought. Even until today, according to Cascardi, his model is still dominant even in the existing analyses of subjectivity and modernity among the thinkers.⁴

This notion of a rational or self-conscious individual was later developed and popularised by the philosophy of the Enlightenment in the Western society of Europe.

⁴ For Hegel's idea see Joseph L.Navickas, *Consciousness and Reality: Hegel's Philosophy of Subjectivity*, 1976:6.

The 18th Century Enlightenment Philosophy

"Enlightenment" is primarily a cultural historian's broad designation for a historical period, roughly the 18th century, in Western society. As a cultural period it is more closely linked with formal philosophical thought. "Enlightenment" and 'Age of Reason' are, in customary usage, nearly interchangeable. There is, however, some tendency among historians of Western culture to use "Age of Reason" for the 17th and 18th centuries together, and to confine "Enlightenment" to the 18th century, when the characteristic ideas and attitudes of rationalism had spread from a small group of advanced thinkers to a relatively large educated public (Edwards 1967:519-525).

The group of propagandists of the Enlightenment were known as **Philosophes**, from the French term for philosophers. They are Voltaire, Diderot, Condorcet, Holbach, Beccaria and their peers. There are three key clusters of ideas which form the world view of the Enlightenment: Reason, Nature, Progress. Their philosophical emphasis was on the concepts of reason, freedom and individualism. They tried to develop critical rationalism, which freed the individual from superstitious belief and intellectual errors, who then, guided by the precepts of science, could reconstruct society through the principles of human reason. Therefore, any political or religious beliefs and values seeking to control the minds of individual are to be condemned.

Based on these philosophical ideas, we can construct the following as the Enlightenment model: an optimistic, this-worldly belief in the power of human beings, brought up rationally from infancy as nature meant them to be, able to achieve steady and unlimited progress toward material comfort, and spiritual happiness for all men on this

earth. Thus the notion of the "ideal man" of the cultural period was to be the rational, tolerant, free and yet convinced and single-minded man (Bronowski and Mazlish 1963:555).

However after the French Revolution the philosophy of the Enlightenment received strong criticism. Those who rejected the individualistic concept of society or the rationalist atomistic framework identified its "negative" and "critical" principles with the collapse of traditional modes of authority and the organic nature of social bonds. To them, the traditional institutions which were rejected by the philosophe, effectively created the social bonds necessary for a functioning society. Religion and family are an integral part of the whole. Therefore these critics proposed the philosophy of 'WE' vs 'I'. Society to them was apprehended through intuition, not reason or science. The society did not consist in an aggregate of individuals, but was the expression of a whole culture, in which the various parts manifest the inner essence and spirit (Swingewood 1991:32-35).

Nevertheless, the influence of the 18th century Enlightenment was tremendous in moulding the intellectual development and direction of Western society, and according to David Hume, it produced Moral Sciences such as psychology, political science, economy and sociology. It is in the field of sociology of culture of the classical sociology that the issue of "rationalism" and its relation to modernity gained strong attention (Swingewood 1991).

Max Weber (1864-1920), took another approach when he wrote *Science as Vocation* (1917) (Swingewood 1991). In his study of Protestantism and capitalism, he tried

to provide the answer to the failure of capitalism as a system to emerge in India, China and the Near East during his time. He found an absence of cultural orientation to the world based around rational values in these cultures, as compared to the Western Culture which is rationalised culture. He conceived rationality as a broad, collective process existing within historical time and space, and defined it as the application of precise modes of calculation and available means in the pursuit of specific goals and ends. Hence, the systematic application and discipline of impersonal rules and regulations to the conduct of social life are interpreted as a rational culture. To him a comprehensively rationalised reality or culture is grounded in rational and methodical action, free of all magical elements, and which pervades all aspects of life. The process of modernisation is the process of rationalisation and secularization or the "disenchantment" of the world with self-consciousness. He described modern society as "rationalized" society or the "disenchanted world" and the eclipse of magical and animistic belief as a feature of modernity.

Weber gives two modes of rationalisation: substantive and formal. The substantive rationality is when the structuring of social life in action is linked with "ultimate" values, ideals, goals and ends. The values of society reflect a fixed natural order or naturalistic thesis; nature therefore constitutes a realm of essences, and supplies the ends of action and desire. On the other hand, formal rationality is when there is a domination of means over ends and the application of quantitative calculation to the purpose of life. This calculating specialization happens in modern industrialised society when we have the triumph of the machine over human autonomy. Thus this leads to another new social phenomenon, the "iron cage" of modernity when there is total domination of bureaucratic ideals over the ideals of life.

However by the late 19th century, the notion of rationality as basis of modernity was challenged. For Nietzsche, modern society was structured in the pluralism of values, in relativism and fragmentation. Under the influence of Nietzsche's philosophy, the autonomy of reason was rejected (Swingewood 1991:316;).⁵ This is further reinforced by new scientific and intellectual findings or discoveries on the role of perception, consciousness, imagination and intuition in human life. This new intellectual climate shapes the cultural and artistic life of the modernist movement.

As a result the notion of modernity has also changed. Modern culture is now perceived as full of complex ambiguity. Compared to traditional society which is based on the wholeness of social order, modern society is undergoing a breakdown of its internal structure. The process of secularization and rationalisation with the goal of progressive liberation of culture from its bonds to the tradition of the past has resulted in a fully "disenchanted world". The culture of modernity is now seen as a "detotalised" whole or using Sartre's phrase, a "detotalised totality". Cascardi sees modernity as the subject of conflicting cultural discourse even though he still regards subjectivity as the principle and dominant framework for the culture of modernity. With this shift, the concept of 'ideal or modern 'man also has changed or may be 'lost' as the idealism or totality of life itself has disintegrated. Modern man is now an individual of full autonomy, free from traditions of the past, and any norms and order. To exercise his total freedom and choice and to achieve individuality, he must be able to break free from the burden of reason and submit himself to alienation of consciousness.

⁵ See also Paul Edwards 1967-5:504-514.

We can see clearly how the subject of modernity has been continually discussed and analysed in Western intellectual history, the result of a tradition of dissent or the tradition of questioning what is traditional from the Renaissance onwards. However, there are two ideals of man which remain dominant throughout its modern intellectual history: firstly, the importance of human potential and self-fulfillment of man, and secondly freedom for the attainment and expression of individuality (Bronowski and Mazlish 1963:547-559).

WESTERN/EUROPEAN CONCEPTS OF MODERNITY IN LITERATURE

An early attempt to interpret "the modern" or "modernity" in Western art was made by Baudelaire in his famous essays "The Painter of Modern Life" (1863) and "On the Heroism of Modern Life" (1846).⁶ Baudelaire defines modernity as "*the transitory, the fugitive, the contingent, the half of art which the other half is the eternal and the immutable*". It is to be found everywhere, not least of all "*in the spectacle of fashionable life and of thousands of stray souls - criminals and kept women -who drift about in the underground of a great city.*" (Hyslop and Hyslop 1964:290-300).

Baudelaire urges artists to seek the beauty and heroism of contemporary modern life. To him true painters "*seize the epic and heroism of contemporary modern life and make us see and understand, through color and design, how great and poetic we are in our cravats and our patent leather boots.*" Works of art (pictures, poems or novels) to him are "*nature reflected by an artist*". They are the artist's vision of beauty, inspired by contemplation and memory, and transformed by imagination into works of art. To Baudelaire, "*the first task of the artist is to substitute man for nature and to protest against*

⁶ For these two and his other essays refer to Lois Boe Hyslop and Francis E.Hyslop,Jr.1964.

nature." He sees the writer more as a visionary than a realist. "Modernity" in his sense is associated with the creative genius of an artist with extraordinary visionary power (Hyslop and Hyslop 1964:16).

Based on the two essays above by Baudelaire, Michel Foucault elaborates his concept and emphasizes three aspects of modernity: firstly, Modern heroism -Modernity "*is not a phenomenon of sensitivity to the fleeting present, it is the will to 'heroize' the present.*" ; Secondly, the transfiguring play of freedom with reality, in which modernity involves taking oneself as an object in the same spirit in which Guys (the painter who was praised by Baudelaire in his essay) transformed the objects he looked at; and thirdly, the ascetic elaboration of the self, which consists in recapturing something eternal that is not beyond the present moment or behind it, but within it (Donoghue 1991).

Matthew Arnold in his lecture in 1857, entitled "**On the Modern Elements In Literature**", describes the modern elements as repose, confidence, tolerance, the free activity of the mind winning new ideas in conditions of material well-being and intellectual maturity or the willingness to judge by reason and search for the laws in things. He gives two supreme virtues of successful 'modern' literature: Intellectual deliverance, the ability to comprehend the present and past; and Adequacy, the ability to represent the complex human development of a modern age in its completest and most harmonious aspect, doing so with the charm of the noble serenity which always accompanies true insight. He found these virtues in the Periclean Athens but not in Elizabethan England. He considers Thucydides as a modern historian but not Sir Walter Raleigh (Neiman 1960:3-19).

Arnold's perception of modernity is criticised by Lionel Trilling as an ideal distance from present reality. To him Arnold's ideal of order, convenience, decorum and rationality might well seem to reduce itself to the small advantages or limitations of the middle class life of few prosperous nations of the 19th century. This ideal is very far from the existing Western sense of modernity and from its modern literature (Trilling 1966:3-30).

Trilling believes that a primary function of modern art and thought is to liberate the individual from the tyranny of his culture in the environmental sense and to permit him to stand beyond it in an autonomy of perception and judgement and not to conform to culture as perceived by Arnold. He advocates that the chief intention of all modern literature is to free oneself from society. This "**adversary intention**" has the purpose of detaching the reader from the habit of thought and feeling that the larger culture imposes, giving him a ground and a vantage point from which to judge, condemn, and revise the culture that produced him, and allowing him to achieve the "**adversary culture**". In fact, Trilling says that the modern element in the Western mind is almost opposite of what Arnold sees - it is nihilism, a "*bitter line of hostility to civilization*" and "*a disenchantment with culture*" (Trilling 1966:3).

This dialectic relationship between the "modern" literature and civilization is explained by Spender. He tries to differentiate "the contemporaries and the moderns" and describes 'the moderns' as "*those who start off by thinking that human nature has changed: or if not human nature, then the relationship of the individual to the environment*" (Spender 1963:xiii). Then, he sees two possible alternatives attached to the modern movement: the transformation of the whole of civilization within a revolutionary vision inspired by arts, or

the end of civilization (Spender 1963:259). Therefore, like Trilling, Spender also views "modern" works as wrestling with existing predicaments which face the Western world.

On the other hand, Walter Pater, in *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* (1873), writes about the ideal arts as a perfect union of matter and form. "*The ideal examples of poetry and painting being those in which the constituent elements of the composition are so welded together, that material or subject no longer strikes the intellect only, nor form, the eye or the ear only; but form and matter in their union and identity, present one single effect to the 'imaginative reason' that complex faculty for which every thought and feeling is twin-born with its sensible analogue or symbol. "He found this union in music." It is the art of music which most completely realises this artistic ideal, this perfect identification of matter and form.*" (Donoghue 1991:40).

Pater then speaks of setting the spirit free "for a moment" or the importance of freedom of thinking of the artist. "*It is the imagination as distinct from reason, it is the mind in the enjoyment of freedom, before it has come to observe the values of sequence and order.*" (Donoghue 1991:40).

Donoghue compares Pater to Arnold and found that both put stress on thought, however Donoghue prefers Pater's conception to Arnold's. "*Arnold was not modern; he was not intransigent, he was willing to see his imagination constrained by the official forms and appearances. Speaking of culture as an inward working of mind and spirit, he knew that was taking a risk of implying that such inwardness offered a feasible alternative to the life lived in public and social terms.*" (Donoghue 1991:34).

"Arnold placed a high valuation upon thought but only as a preparation for action in the world. Thought was valid because it improved our prospect of acting well and justly. The reason why Pater, and not Arnold, is the begetter of Modernity in English literature that he showed how thinking could be valued as an intrinsic satisfaction: it did not have to be justified in relation to its sequence as action in the world." (Donoghue 1991:54).

Thus Donoghue regards freedom of thinking, which is not necessarily followed by action, as an important criterion of modernity. This factor is also supported by Bradbury who describes Arnold's conception as "substantially classical" and he also regards Pater as the spokesman for new and modern sensations for he spoke of the "quickened, multiplied consciousness" of modern times (Bradbury 1988).

With the rejection of Arnold's conception of "the modern" and the acceptance of Pater's freedom of thinking by western literary scholars, we witness a major semantic shift of the term. Now, self-consciousness becomes central to the Western concept of modernity. Even though, Pater, who spoke for it, is advocated as the "begetter of Modernity" in English literature, Oppenheimer argues that modern thought and literature were born with the invention of the sonnet in the 13th century Italy by Giacomo da Lentino (1188-1240). In his interesting study, using fifty one new translations of sonnets from four languages spanning more than seven centuries, he states that the sonnet as the first lyric form since the fall of the Roman Empire was meant not for music or performance but for silent reading, and he also demonstrates that the sonnet was the first modern literary form deliberately intended to portray the self in conflict and to explore self-consciousness (Oppenheimer 1989).

According to him, before the invention of sonnet the medieval poems were meant to be performed and were outward turning and accepted heavenly guidance. The final experiences are not of self-consciousness but of knowledge of God. However, the sonnet departed from the performed poetry of the day with its treatment of emotions with logic.

"Emotional problems, especially problems in love, needed no longer merely be expressed or performed: they might now actually be resolved, or provisionally resolved, through the logic of a form that turned inward, to a resolution in the abiding peace of the soul itself, or if one were not so certain of the existence of the soul, in reason. Reason, after all, was perceived as a manifestation of God's mind and of divine love."
(Oppenheimer 1989:3-4).

To him, the sonnet offered a new way of thinking about mankind, and was meant as a means of meditation and an instrument of self-reflection:

"Giacomo all unwittingly helped to change how human beings were to look at themselves and express themselves, by bringing into their literature the great new facts of silence, introspection, and self-consciousness by creating the lyric of the private soul."
(Oppenheimer 1989:40).

"It led to a fashion in self-conscious, silent, and meditative literature that continues into our day. It led to a fashion in a new sort of imaginative literature as well, the literature in which concrete images would replace allegorical personifications, thereby promoting a new method of symbolism with more direct and clear connections to the subconscious."
(Oppenheimer 1989:27).

Oppenheimer presents an interesting theory about the source of thought and literature that may be termed "modern". He treats the sonnet not as a genre so much as a mode of thought. The modern mind to him means: the self-conscious, silent, meditative, self-reflective and logical (and harmonious to soul and cosmic order). Compared to other scholars who regard content as the decisive factor, and literary genre or form only as a product but not as a process, he demonstrates to us the intrinsic value of literary genre or form itself as a modern element.

The element of self-consciousness or subjectivity is also emphasized by Lukacs in his analysis of another genre of literature: prose. If Oppenheimer found modernity in the sonnet, Lukacs found it in the novel. Compared to the epic which was a reflection of collective values and idealism and soul of society; the novel to him expresses individual desires, goals, autonomy, transcendental freedom and the real world. In fact the novel reflects the reality of "disintegrated civilization" or of what Weber called the "disenchanted" world (Lukacs 1978).

"The novel is the epic of an age in which the extensive totality of life is no longer directly given, yet which still thinks in terms of totality." (Lukacs 1978:56).

Lukacs regards Cervantes' *Don Quixote* (1605) as a truly great and modern work. He places the origins of the novel on the edge of a great upheaval of values:

"the first great novel of world literature stands at the beginning of the time when the Christian God began to forsake the world; when man became lonely and could not find meaning and substance only in his own soul, whose home was nowhere; when the world,

released from its paradoxical anchorage in a beyond that is truly present, was abandoned to its meaninglessness." (Lukacs 1978:103).

Lukacs praises Cervantes for being able to portray the paradoxes of illusion and reality by self-consciousness, and managing to reconcile these through an effective literary device. Therefore, Cervantes appears as the faithful Christian and loyal patriot, a steadfast believer in the values of traditional society; yet on the other hand his protagonist is set in a world that no longer recognizes the purpose of heroic action and that has come to doubt the value of literature as a source of ethical instruction and cultural renewal.

Lukacs posits irony as the highest category of expression to us. The irony of *Don Quixote* is for him paradigmatic of a coming to terms with values in a real world without essential forms. Irony is therefore an act of form-making that represents a momentary reconciliation of substance and form.

Carlos Fuentes also strongly feels that this novel is the first modern novel. "*for me, the modern world begins when Don Quixote de la Mancha, in 1605, leaves his village, goes out into the world, and discovers that the world does not resemble what he has read about it. Many things are changing in the world; many others are surviving. Don Quixote tells us just this: this is why he is so modern, but also so ancient, so eternal. He illustrates the rupture of a world based on analogy and trust into differentiation. He makes evident a challenge that we consider peculiarly ours: how to accept the diversity and mutation of the world, while retaining the mind's power for analogy and unity, so that this changing world shall not become meaningless.*

Don Quixote tells us that being modern is not a question of sacrificing the past in favour of the new, but of maintaining, comparing and remembering values we have created, making them modern so as not to lose the value of the modern." (Fuentes 1986:i).

The discussions on the concept of modernity in Western literary tradition above have shown us various interpretations of its meaning. Nevertheless, we can derive the underlying principle which has governed the 'modern' mind and literature: the significance of subjectivity or the expression of self-consciousness. To understand how this concept is applied and reinforced in Western literature, we need to look at the works of the modernist movement which strongly uphold and demonstrate this principle.

MODERNISM

In literature, *modernism* is the name given to that major transformation of the forms, spirit, the nature of the arts, a profound artistic revolution that stirred all of Europe and the United States and radically changed the direction of all artistic expressions, which took place somewhere between 1870s and the outbreak of the Second World War. Modernism belonged to the period of transition of the Western world out of the Romantic movement and into a new age. It refers to the great age of the century's literature, the age of Yeats, Joyce, Eliot, Lawrence, Proust, Kafka, Mann, Gide, Conrad, Wallace Steven, Woolf, Poe, Valery, Dostoevsky and Rilke.

This literary movement developed alongside great changes in the Western world during that historical period. Raymond William sees modernism as a movement within the changing cultural milieu of the metropolis in the second half of the 19th century and first

half of the 20th century. He regards imperialism as the great stimulus to the formation of the city as a cultural centre, which then shaped the complexity and sophistication of social relationships. These complex relationships created senses of strangeness, distance and the universal myth-sense of loneliness and homelessness among writers who were travelers, immigrants or dwellers of the great cities (Williams 1992:164-170).

Bradbury, on the other hand, sees beyond the impact of those physical changes. Modernism, to him, is the product of changes in the external world as well as changes in the world within. He describes the internal changes in the forms of the new sociological, scientific views and secular accounts of nature and history, expounded in the writings of Marx, Engels and Darwin, which challenged the old theocentric and romantic notions; and the new notions of what constituted the nature of perception, intuition and consciousness expressed by Pater, William James, Freud and Bergson. These comprehensive changes acted as the cultural and intellectual climate for modernism. Howe also mentioned the intellectual sources for modernism in the writings of Sir James Frazer, Marx, Engels, Freud and Nietzsche (in Bradbury 1988:1-24).⁷

The new environment and spirit of the age developed by the changes were perceived as a crisis of the authority in Western Europe and America, and in the history of Western humanism. The Modernist movement is believed to be the result of and reaction of the artist to the crisis of western civilization. Literary and artistic imagination began increasingly to revolt against the scientific, the material and the bourgeois social world (Josipovici

⁷ However, Ellmann and Feidelson have provided us with a comprehensive list of writings which had influenced modernism and became the backgrounds for the Western modern literary tradition (in Bradbury 1988).

1987:109-123). In contrast to traditional literature which conforms and confirms conventional ways of seeing and taking, the modernist writer not only questions and challenges the implicit assumptions of traditional literature, but rebels against the official forms and appearances.

Donoghue describes this phenomenon as follow:

"...the writers we think of as being modern are those who at least contemplated the possibility of seceding from society and disavowing the predominantly social understanding of human life. Not because they wanted more congenial social arrangements, but because they wanted to escape from all social arrangements. I refer to situations in which desire, real or imagined, cannot be satisfied by any public or accredited form available for its apprehension, and, as a result, withdraws its credence from such forms." (Donoghue 1991:33).

Therefore, the writer rejects any social responsibility which then becomes an obstacle to him and his writings. *"But there is a long-established tradition which would go further and hold that we ought to feel responsible for things on the analogy of our responsibility toward other people. If we feel that things and people are the work of God, however different their scale of being, it becomes a more pressing matter to respect things somewhat as we respect people. One of the marks of the literature we think as modern, however, is a rejection of such responsibility, a turning away from the things in front of us, as if they constituted chiefly an obstacle to our relation to ourselves." (Donoghue 1991:39).*

The "modern" writer is more concerned with his freedom and, the projection of his own self to discover and bring forth the capacities of his own self. This "refusing will" arose in response to a certain situation, that of individuals finding their individuality threatened. By their rejection of the existing values, norms and culture, by their hostility to civilization, the artists now acquired their own sense of aesthetic independence and decadent freedom (Bradbury 1988:12).

Lukacs explains the underlying feelings and thinking or the ideological basis of the modernist movement (see Walder 1992:154-164). According to him, modernist writers see the image of man by nature as solitary, asocial, unable to enter into relationships with other human beings and it is impossible to determine theoretically the origin and goal of human existence.

"Man, thus conceived, is an ahistorical being...This negation of history takes two different forms in modernist literature. First, the hero is strictly confined within the limits of his own experience. There is not for him - and apparently not for his creator- any pre-existent reality beyond his own self, acting upon him or being acted upon him. Secondly, the hero himself is without personal history. He is 'thrown-into-the world: meaninglessly, unfathomably. He does not develop through contact with the world: he neither forms nor is formed by it. The only 'development' in this literature is the gradual revelation of the human condition. Man is now what he has always been and always will be. The narrator, the examining subject, is in motion; the examined reality is static." (Walder 1992:160).

This ideology has reconstructed Western artistic tradition, its sense of form and language, and its contemporary values, culture and styles. The new poetic messages, new forms and expressions came from the breakdown of the usable past, the collapse of certainty, the breakdown of the world and the image. They did not spring from the soil of a single nation, but from the great interfusions of forms, language and new techniques that were developing in the culture-capitals of Europe and United States, such as Paris, Berlin, Vienna, Prague, Moscow, St.Petersburg, London, Zurich, New York and Chicago.

Irving Howe, who defines "the modern" as referring to "sensibility and style" and a term of critical placement and judgement, attempts to clarify the formal or literary attributes of modernism. Based on his observations, he gives nine attributes but among these attributes, he discovers that nihilism has become the central preoccupation of the literature.

"Nihilism lies at the center of all that we mean by modernist literature, both as subject and symptom, a demon overcome and a demon victorious. For the terror which haunts the modern mind is that of a meaningless and eternal death. The death of the gods would not trouble us if we, in discovering that they have died, did not have to die alongside them. Heroically the modern sensibility struggles with its passion for eternal renewal, even as it keeps searching for ways to secure its own end.

But no, it will not die, neither heroically nor quietly, in struggle or triumph. It will live on, beyond age, through vulgar reincarnation and parodic mimesis. The lean youth has grown heavy; he chokes and gasps with the approval of the world he had dismissed; he

cannot find for himself the pure air of neglect. Not the hostility of those who came before but the patronage of those who come later- that is the torment of modernism." (Howe 1967:39-40).

Ortega Gasset also analyzes the new style of modernist art and finds that it contains certain closely connected tendencies. He describes the features as following: to dehumanize art, to avoid living forms, to see to it that the work of art is nothing but a work of art; to consider art as play and nothing else, to be essentially ironical, to beware of sham and hence to aspire to scrupulous realization; and finally to regard art as a thing of no transcending consequences. In his effort to ascertain the most general and the most characteristic feature of modern artistic production, he comes upon the tendency to dehumanize art. The dehumanization of art to him resulted when the artist is seen going against reality, deforming reality and shattering its human aspect. The art is inhuman not because it contains no things human, but because it is an explicit act of dehumanization (see Howe 1967:83-96).

The common characteristics of these new arts have been summed up by Bradbury as following:

"They were frequently hard, ironic, fragmentary. Their central characters were more often victims than actors, and the nature of the existence was presented as weak and fragile. The literary form was often broken, and words seemed scarcely able to express experience. Yet the modern methods were also exciting and remarkable. Free verse in poetry, 'stream-of-consciousness' technique in the novel, expressionism in the theatre now

seemed persistent conventions, indications of a new attitude to form and life itself." (Bradbury 1988:19).

Modernist works, according to him are "*the Western greatest and most disturbing literature and some its most painful expression of modern self-awareness and anxiety*" (Bradbury 1988:5). Trilling, on the other hand, regards this literature as one of the most salient and significant manifestations of the Western culture of the present time and these "modern" expressions as the alienation of the modern man as exemplified by the artist (Trilling 1966:4).

Conclusions

From the above ideas and discussions, we can state that the Western literary world recognizes the following basic elements as traits of "modern writing" or characteristic of the "modern writer":

- i. The modern writer as a man of vision, a creative genius who has extraordinary visionary power;
- ii. The modern writer exercises freedom in thinking and expression for self fulfillment; and
- iii. The modern writer aims to achieve perfect union between matter and form, but without being confined by normatic poetics.
- iv. The modern writer rebels or is not constrained by official or accepted forms and appearance;
- v. The modern writer produces original and innovative works.

In the Western literary tradition, literature is seen as a criticism of life. In fact, its "modern" literature is more a reflection of conflict or quarrel between the self and the society. The aim or primary intention of all "modern" Western writers is to free themselves from any forms of restrictions of society which hinder their creativity. Modern writers reject the normative poetics and "social responsibility" which are considered obstacles to self and the creative process. Nevertheless, there are no prescriptive criteria of modernity in the Western tradition; for any creative piece of work may be accepted as new and modern, as long it is a novel innovation and original in self-expression. Thus, the criterion of originality is very much valued and prominent in identifying the modern literature. A true modern author, in the Western literary tradition, is a creative genius, who produces original aesthetic works to manifest his artistic freedom as an individual, and to attain self-fulfillment.

The Western writers actually believe in the importance of social contribution, but to them, this is best done through self fulfillment: by fulfilling oneself one enriches and hence contributes to society.

The Western concepts or notions of "the modern" or "modernity", as reflected in modernist movement, are very much value laden and culturally bound. They are moulded and interpreted based on the Western value system or philosophy which stresses the value of self above society. Can these concepts be possibly adopted and applied in our evaluation of other non-western literary traditions, especially the Malay-Indonesian literature? Before that, let us look at Japanese experience and other Asian literary traditions.

JAPANESE LITERARY EXPERIENCE

Donald Keene, in his study of Japanese literature, observes the processes of imitation and absorption of European literary tradition during the Meiji Restoration Period (1868). He finds that the exposure to the European literature within a short span of time of 40 years had transformed remarkably Japanese literature from "*idle quips directed at the oddities of the West to Symbolist poetry, from the thousandth-told tale of the gay young blade and the harlots to the complexities of the psychological novel.*" (Keene 1956:13). The European traditions were absorbed not only by the novels but by the drama and poetry as well.

The exposure to or encounters with the Western tradition have led to two important discoveries in Japanese literature which imparted distinctive qualities to its new literature: the discovery of romantic love and the discovery of the individual:

"Rousseau's affirmation that, if not better than other men he was at least different, would not have made much sense to Japanese authors of the past, who did not doubt they were at least superior to ordinary people. But beginning in the Meiji era the Japanese wrote novels in which they exposed their peculiarities, the secrets that they would normally not have revealed, even to close friends, in an assertion of their individuality. The 'I novels' as such examples of autobiographical fiction came to be called, had their roots in a romantic discovery but developed in terms of naturalistic descriptions of ordinary life led by ordinary men, in contrast to the larger-than-life adventures that had been the stuff of fiction in Japan for centuries. In West Naturalism had been a reaction to Romanticism, but in Japan, where European literary developments that had occurred over a period of many years were sometimes introduced and adopted within a single decade. Naturalism and Romanticism might be found in the same work.

The 'I novels' repeatedly attacked and only seldom defended, nevertheless proved to be invincible, both because they satisfied a need for self-expression on the part of authors who had discovered their true selves, and because readers were interested in the authors as people, not merely as purveyors of stories." (Keene 1984:3-4).

This "individualism" which becomes a new phenomenon in Japanese literature, however, does not mean that the Japanese abandoned their native tradition. Keene finds that, *"quite the contrary, Japanese literature since the beginning of the Meiji era has been marked by periodic 'returns' to Japanese tradition, and many author, after earlier displaying great enthusiasm for European literature and civilization, have made this return, often ending with a combination that, if not 'the best of East and West', expresses the realization that the two are now inseparably joined. The synthesis that has developed from the reconciliation between the opposing poles of native and foreign is perhaps the most striking characteristic of modern Japanese literature."* (Keene 1984:4-5). He then names Nagai Kafu, Tanikazi Jun'ichiro, Akutagawa Ryunosuke, Kawabata Yasunari and Mishima Yukio as "strikingly individual writers" whose works are unique among twentieth century literature because *"they fused the sensibilities of East and West in a particularly compelling, often brilliant manner"* (1984:8). Later, Keene observes that *"the passion for European literature continued, but to it was added a growing interest in the old Japan"*; he therefore concludes that *"Japanese literature was passing from a period when European works were slavishly imitated to one when an awareness and receptivity to them was not permitted to blot out the native heritage."* (Keene 1956:25).

Ikuko Atsumi helps us to understand better Keene's observation of "periodic returns to traditions" when she explains the pattern of cultural borrowing and adaptation which she calls the "cultural pendulum" of the Japanese, as follows: "*The first decade of Meiji was marked by 'civilisation and enlightenment', inspired largely by the United States. Turning away from the American model, the second decade saw a growing preference for European institutions, and an enthusiasm for democratic ideals. The third decade, ending with the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War in 1894, saw a resurgence of nationalism and appreciation for the traditional.*

The post-war period likewise evidences this pendulum-like-swing, beginning with a renewed enthusiasm for European and American models. In 1960s these concepts and movements from abroad were internalised and cultivated as truly original trends emerged. With the violent protest movements opposing the Japan-US security treaty still simmering in the late 1960s, the 1970s ushered in a period of introverted rediscovery and renewed appreciation of traditional values." (Atsumi 1982:101-114).

She observes a similar cultural pendulum in the evolution of Japanese poetry since the Meiji Restoration. "*The main concern of Japanese writers before the modern age was not the ego, but its submergence in impersonality. Post-Meiji writers took Western thought and literature as their model and, in the process, acquired Western ideas on individualism and respect for the importance of ego. They attempted to nurture a 'modern ego' in traditional soil, oblivious of the fact that their hierarchical society, dominated by control imposed from above, was still in essence a pre-modern society. The more they devoted themselves to individualism, in defiance of the spirit of their society - their 'whole' - the*

greater was their need for a secure ego, one confident enough to withstand the 'whole'. When it failed to become to their aid, they were crushed by the overwhelming and monolithic strength of their own society. It is possible that the great number of major writers who committed suicide reflects the lack of an organic and mutually sustaining relationship between the individual and the 'whole'.

In the wake of utter ruin in the Second World War, however, a new trend appeared in Japan. It expressed less concern with the preoccupations of individuals than the desire to capture 'wholeness' - in relationships, in society, in the world -where it could be found. The shift occurred not only in Japan, but everywhere, for several reasons. Technology had made possible genocide and pollution on a global scale, even the very destruction of mankind. The Japanese realised that Western 'rationality', which they had so naively taken as their model, could not provide all the answers. Tamura saw modern civilisation as a 'cliff' and man, in his rush for progress, fast approaching the brink. The fall of scientism was accompanied by the atrophy of humanism. Clearly it was over optimistic to believe that the pursuit of individualism would lead to universal truth.

Concurrent with this post-war pessimism was a change in the world-view of Japanese poets. A convergence of world cultures had occurred, and the Japanese now saw themselves as part of a larger entity. It grew more important to combine appreciation of Japan's uniqueness with respect for, and communication with, the rest of the world. Poets searched for universals both in their national identity and in other cultures." (Atsumi 1982:103-4).

According to her, Japanese poets responded to the post-war developments by producing a new form of poetry. The new form of poetry emerged and reached maturity especially after the Second World War. This new poetry, Gendaishi (literally, contemporary poetry) “ *acts as a kind of radar, registering the sensibilities and mentality of a world dominated by technology. In fact, its intricate precision and sophisticated compactness can be compared to certain aspects of present-day technology.*” (Atsumi 1982:101).

She then discusses contemporary Japanese poems, represented by the works of three poets: Tamura Ryuichi (1923-), Irisawa Yasuo (1931-) and Yoshimasu Gozo (1939-) and found that contemporary Japanese poems are longer and larger in scope than before. The contemporary poems have become a variety of epic, a genre appropriate to, and generated by, an age of awesomely developed technology. What is more important to note about her observations on this poetry is the new phenomenon that a new stage of expression is approaching in which an organic relationship between the individual and the world is emerging.

She concludes that Japan experienced a rapid cultural convergence of East and West in the 70s, and it seems to be forging a new unity out of the disparate elements of many cultures. The desire to regain a sense of universality, and the desire to re-establish a dynamic relationship between the individual and the whole, make it possible for her to create a new form of literature appropriate to a global age.

Atsumi's interesting finding is very significant for our efforts to see the application of the criterion of "self or individual" as advocated in Western literary tradition. Contemporary Japanese poets have shown us that they can produce more universal and appropriate forms of literature for our global age without necessarily adopting the individual approach, on the contrary, they have achieved it either by rejecting it or by adopting an opposite criterion.

OTHER ASIAN LITERARY TRADITIONS

Compared to Japan, other Asian literatures have undergone similar exposure to the Western tradition but of a lesser intensity or passion. For literatures such as Chinese, Thai, Malay, Indonesian and those of other Southeast Asian countries, the Westernization of their literature is a rather slower process which mainly affects literary forms and structures without really changing its functional objectives and basic features. Generally, Asian writers still maintain the traditional perspective of their literary traditions regardless of the rapid social and cultural changes which have taken place.

Like the Japanese, Chinese writers also showed great interest in Western literature and looked towards Western models for their creative expression and this can be seen in Chinese literature in the May Fourth Era.⁸ Western culture flowed into China by means of Japanese translations and Japanized Western theory. May Fourth writers aimed to 'save' China and to integrate her into the modern world. In their effort to create a new literature that would establish new values and consciousness, they avidly devoured the literature and

⁸ The May Fourth Movement began as a demonstration on May 4, 1919, against the Peking government. The movement stimulated and galvanized an incipient cultural movement that was directed at throwing off the weight of China's Confucian tradition and absorbing of Western culture. This cultural movement culminated in the early decades of the 20th century in a literary movement known as the May Fourth literature. For details of this literature, see Merle Goldman 1977.

thought of the Western world and they absorbed all the main trends in Western culture such as romanticism, realism, naturalism and symbolism. They were attracted to Western techniques and drawn to the Western use of psychological insight to depict individual emotions and interpersonal relations. The Western short story became the major genre of the writers as it was found to be an effective means for reflecting an individual's inner conflicts as he moved from the old to new society.

However, May Fourth writers did not share a similar sense of social alienation as their Western counterparts. They had a commitment to both art and society. This dual commitment influenced them to seek for a balance between their commitment to their aesthetic standards and their political vision. Some stressed social content and others artistic technique. May Fourth literary works *"as a whole projected an individual yet generalized, unique yet representative, conceptual yet realistic picture of life in a society undergoing revolutionary change. Because these works were artistically compelling as well as socially relevant, they, more than the era's political doctrines and slogans, captured the imagination and transformed the outlook of a generation of educated Chinese youth."* (Goldman 1977:8).

Nevertheless, after the early 1930s the trend towards the left and an enthusiasm for mass and proletarian literature turned most writers away from the West, except for Soviet and Marxist literature. A number of important writers shifted the focus of their work from their own personal experience and individual vision to more ideological and programatic themes. Chinese Writers *"moved stories of individuals and individual consciousness to panoramic treatments of class consciousness and great social and economic forces."*

Portrayals of contradictions within the individual were replaced by portrayals of contradictions within society. This pattern followed a trend apparent in the West, but their shift of focus was more a result of their own experiences in China." (Goldman 1977:3).

Despite its achievement and recording of revolutionary change, Cyril Birch regards the May Fourth literature as an anomaly in China's cultural and literary history. He compares the characteristics, style, grammar, and ideas of a May Fourth piece of literature with both those of a traditional piece and those of post-1949 piece. He finds that within this context, there is a greater continuity between pre-May Fourth and post-May Fourth literature than between either of these and May Fourth literature. He regards the post-1949 literary work as a return to the didacticism that characterised traditional Chinese literature. Pre-May Fourth and post-May Fourth literature resemble each other in their optimistic, easily understood reflections of the ideals of society. Individual personalities do not transcend the roles the characters play in their society. In contrast, he finds that May Fourth literature in both content and form was a radical change in the Chinese context, a change that was more in tune with the Western culture than with Chinese culture. May Fourth characters are principally nonheroes. As they confront new realities, their individual personalities transcend their assigned identities (also in Goldman 1977:385-404). Therefore, the westernization of Chinese literature, though significant, does not really change its functional objectives and traditional perspectives.

Another example of traditional perspective in Asian literary tradition is Thai literature. Rutnin, in her study of modern Thai Literature, states that the westernization of literary forms and structures of Thai literature has not deeply affected the Thai system of

values and philosophy of life. In their novels, plays and poetry, Thai writers frequently mention the Buddhist acceptance of the impermanence of the existence and the solution prescribed by the Lokiya Dharma for best coping with actual life situations so as to cause the least possible suffering for oneself and for others. When confronted with misfortune, death, sickness, grief or any hardship in life, one has to face the world as it is and work towards peaceful co-existence. Contemporary Thai writings conform to this system of beliefs and values and thus describe the harmonious relationship between individual and society and life in general (Rutnin 1988:75-77).

The relationship between individual and society is the subject of study for Kintanar (1988). In her comparative analysis of selected novels and short stories written by ASEAN writers, she aims to explore the dynamic interaction between individual experiences and responses to social changes and reality and to discover the pattern that emerges from the relationship, by adopting modernist perspectives or western themes such as consciousness, alienation, exile and social class. Kintanar makes several interesting observations:

- i. The modern forms of fiction in Southeast Asia are not direct transplants from the West but have their roots in native soil. They are the products of the dynamic interaction between the need to look forward to a form of modern literary development suitable for the expression of life in a changing society, and the equally compelling need to look back and find links with indigenous traditions which are a repository of that society's culture.

- ii. The difficulties of nation building along with the pressures of modernizing society force the individual to an awareness of his identities, both personal and social. This emerging sense of identity, often accompanied by much pain and conflict, may significantly alter the individual's perception of his place in the community.
- iii. The perception of social inequality in their societies has inspired many writers of Southeast Asia to write about the life of the common people and focus attention on their plight, seen as arising primarily from the existence of class distinctions in society. 'Literature for society' has been the rallying cry for many writers in various countries of the region who see the primary responsibility of the writer as service to society, particularly to the masses of the people.
- iv. The authors see their role as bringing about changes in society by means of their writings. Such works invariably engage in social criticism, pointing out and decrying whatever ills they see in their particular society; others may go further and incorporate suggestions or an actual programme as to how such ills may be remedied. A common theme is the need for the socially concerned individual to commit himself to the achievement of justice and equality in society.

Kintanar's observations show us that even though the Southeast Asian literature consists of modernist elements such as the tension and conflict between self and society,

and a sense of alienation, it does not totally separate the individual writer from society, or from his social responsibility. In fact the writer explores the creative tension between the individual and society both as a source of themes and as a way of depicting social reality. The literature's great virtue, according to her, "*lay in finding a way to combine 'the tragic concern for the individual with the comic concern for society'. Tragic in the sense that the individual must continually face the fact of his aloneness....the comic concern for society, on the hand, lies in the fact that in spite of the conflict situations which continually arise within it, the larger movement of society has always been toward harmonization and reconciliation of its individual members. Similarly, the individual feels the need to relate himself from fellow men to mitigate his sense of isolation and aloneness. As a social being with a deep need to share, to help, to feel as a member of a group, it is natural for him to reach out to other men who may have similar needs, purposes and desires. The sense of community thus forged serves as a matrix within which he articulate both his individual and social needs.*" (Kintanar 1988:2-3).

So compared to Western literature which places the individual above society, and rejects the established culture for the "**adversary culture**", Southeast Asian literature shows that the sense of community or social responsibility is stronger than a writer's sense of individualism, and in fact the writers studied invariably present the perceived need to hold on to one's culture in the face of change.

A similar finding is also given by Wang Gungwu (1981). Based on the working papers presented at a colloquium, he observes the emergence of "Individual writers" in Asian literatures and regard it as the best documented social change in the area:

"The one great social change in Asia that literature documents magnificently is the emergence of the individual writer. This has not come about easily and it is not the same thing as the struggle for the individualism that has faltered again and again all over Asia. It is the fact of individual authorship, the idea of the author writing as an individual, that underwent a radical change during the 20th century. That change has been uniform and the authors themselves have not always insisted on it. The pressure to conform, to write anonymously or collectively, is still there, but the breakthrough has occurred in most countries and we may speak of Mao Tun (Chan), Jose Nava (McCoy), L.Francisco (Guerrero), Pramoedya Ananta Toer (Scherer, Haridas, Johns), R.K.Narayan (Harrex), Nasrul Islam (Ray), Chairil Anwar (Johns) and identify the singularity of the achievements of each of them." (Wang Gungwu 1981:30).

Wang Gungwu, however, recognizes the limitation of these individual writers in facing their own society and this limitation imposed by the society reinforces the earlier findings by Atsumi and Kintanar:

"Hence many of the essays here turn to the modern writer's response when he seeks the right balance between his individuality and his sense of social responsibility. It would be a difficult but not an impossible task if he were indeed left alone to chose. But as most of the essays show, with Asia changing rapidly during the past century, it is society's demands which come first and, sooner or later and one after another, the writers go along with the changes and bring their literary skills with them." (1981:6).

The above observations of the literatures outside the Western world show that the eastern literary sensibility differs from the western literary sensibility. Therefore, the

concepts of individuality and originality as the attributes of modernity, advocated in the Western tradition, and clearly manifested in the modernist movement, are interpreted or viewed differently by other literary traditions which uphold different value systems or philosophies of life. This brings us to the problem of applicability of the criteria and the existing interpretations of the concept of modernity in the Malay and Indonesian context.

PART III

UNDERSTANDING THE TRADITIONS

CHAPTER 3

THE CONCEPT OF LITERARY TRADITION: MALAY NARRATIVE CONVENTIONS

Introduction

“Modernity” is a relative concept. Its true meaning and attributes are better understood if perceived in relation to the notion of “tradition”. Just like the words “day” and “night”: the meaning of “day” is clearly discerned only after experiencing the “night” or vice versa. To grasp their whole semantic entity, we cannot separate the two and discuss each one in isolation. The elements and nature of modernity develop from traditional foundations, whether as antithesis to or synthesis of it. No literary development could emerge from a cultural vacuum; therefore, we need to know the nature or notion of traditions or conventions in a literature before we can discuss and appreciate elements of modernity and innovations introduced. On the other hand perception of tradition is also shaped by perception of modernity.

This chapter attempts to illustrate the nature of Malay literary tradition by focussing on its narrative conventions, based on oral and written traditions. The main features of Malay narrative conventions will be identified from the exploratory studies and research done on the subject.

MALAY LITERARY TRADITION

Literary tradition is defined here as the inherited past which is available for the writer to study and learn from, or which he has unconsciously applied. It refers to the writer’s native

language, literary forms, codes, devices, and conventions from the past. (Cuddon 1991:982).

Generally, there are two sources or types of Malay literary traditions: oral and written. The complete picture of Malay literary tradition is yet to be fully explored and systematically constructed.¹ At our current state of knowledge accumulated from several studies done so far, we can only gather scattered images and try to trace out the dominant features of the two traditions. In doing so, we are confronted with several basic issues and serious problems.

PROBLEMS IN RECONSTRUCTING MALAY LITERARY TRADITION

Malay oral tradition has attracted numerous studies.² Generally the studies on oral tradition are exploratory in nature. With the exception of a few studies, they are rather descriptive, only providing us with rudimentary knowledge of the tradition. Much of what we know about Malay "folk-literature" derives from the recordings of some traditional texts attempted and published by British administrators such as Maxwell, Clifford, Sturrock and Winstedt. Sweeney, however, finds these works have little to do with oral literature as the methodology employed to compile and study such works has been identical to that used in the study of written works. As a result, the early collectors, compilers and editors of oral

¹ A first attempt has been made by Braginsky, in his book, *The System of Classical Malay Literature* (1993).

² See Maxwell (1886); Klinkert (1893); Wilkinson (1907); Winstedt (1906, 1908, 1910, 1917, 1921, 1939, 1941, 1943, 1957 a, b, 1969), Overbeck (1914,1922); Dussek (1918); Sulaiman Muhd (1907); Wilkinson and Winstedt (1961); Za'ba (1962); Bottom (1963); Awang Had Salleh (1964); Zakaria Hitam (1966-1981); A.Bakar Hamid (1967); Mohd Taib Osman (1968,1970,1972,1974, 1976,1977 and 1981); Sweeney (1969, 1970, 1971a,b,c,1973,1976, 1980 and 1987); Alis Murni (1969); Tham (1970); Danandjaja (1973a,b,1986); Siti Aishah Mat Ali (1974); Phillips (1979); Muhd Haji Salleh (1979,1984,1991); Navis (1980); Umar Junus (1980); Zainal Abidin Bakar (1983); Mohd Khalid Taib (1983); Proudfoot (1984); Ismail Hamid (1986); Mustafa Muhd Isa (1987); Inon Shaharuddin (1988); Harun Mat Piah (1989); S.Othman S.Omar (1990); and Jamilah Ahmad (1993).

literature ignored the oral nature of the oral literature and were unable to capture its true form because of its adaptation from an oral to a written medium.³

Sweeney, based on Ong's approach, has also challenged the basic assumptions and Western methods of analysing Malay literature based on Western urban middle class standards and the print culture, i.e. the attempt to contextualize them in a print-based mental set. These tendencies, according to him, have led to a failure to appreciate the literature and the nature of orality and hence influenced some scholars to criticize the texts as "*a very poor one indeed*", "*pompous, pretentious and verbose*", and "*full of digressions and repetitions*" (Sweeney 1980a:1). Sweeney is of the opinion that traditional Malay society is an oral society and this orality must be first understood in any literary study. The old oral methods of perceiving knowledge, such as paratactic, formulaic, repetitive, narrative and concrete modes of expression were necessary for effective communication in an orally producing and aurally consuming society but not in a print culture. Therefore, to understand oral tradition, he emphasizes, we must be aware of Malay traditional methods of differentiating knowledge. To him, the prerequisite for understanding any aspect of Malay oral and written composition is the study of Malay discourse as a whole (Sweeney 1990a).

Several studies have been conducted on Malay written tradition.⁴ Several catalogues

³ According to Sweeney "*the editors have presented little information on the original form, and what is provided is vague and, in cases, contradictory... The main aim of the editors of these works was to provide suitable reading material for vernacular schools, and the adaptors would naturally, and quite rightly so, discard the conventions of oral literature and employ literary style for a written medium. ...with few exceptions, the editors make little mention of the original form.*" (Sweeney 1973:48).

⁴ Informations on Malay manuscripts can be obtained from various academic dissertations and articles written since Van der Tuuk (1866). Among important ones are Winstedt (1920); Voorhoeve (1964, 1969); Teeuw (1967); and Ismail Hussain (1974).

of Malay manuscripts have been produced.⁵ The above catalogues only give us a very general picture of the Malay manuscript corpus for there are numerous fundamental issues still untouched. Actually, research on written traditions, especially on the manuscript tradition, is hindered by various problems. The main problems which have been identified and raised are as follows:-

The first problem is of dating and identifying the authors or scribes of the manuscripts. Scholars have reiterated the need to ascribe dates of writing and copying manuscripts and to know more about the work of the scribes and the position of the authors (Jones 1980, 1983; and Chambert-Loir 1984), but they are faced with the difficulty of establishing precise periods and regions of creation (Chambert-Loir, 1984). In fact, until now we are still in the dark as to the identity and geographic origin of the earliest or oldest Malay manuscript. There have been various speculations on this question (Van Ronkel 1896; Shellabear 1898; Brakel 1979; and Al-Attas 1988). However these speculations have only attracted further doubts (Jones 1990).

Another difficulty faced is in locating and delineating the extent, scope and totality of the manuscript corpus. The actual number of manuscripts now extant is still unknown. The catalogues produced only act as a general guideline or basic indicator. Some estimated figures are given: 5000 manuscripts comprising 800 titles (Ismail Hussein 1974:12); 4000 manuscripts unevenly distributed over 26 countries (Chamber-Loir 1980); and 10,000 manuscripts (Symposium 1982). There are also some new discoveries of manuscripts now

⁵ For examples see Chambert-Loir (1980); Ismail Hussain (1971, 1978 a and b); Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia (1985, 1987, 1989, 1990a, b, 1991 and 1992); Ricklefs and Voorhoeve (1963, 1977, 1982); Teeuw (1967, 1952a, b, 1955 a, b, 1963, 1969b, 1973, 1975); and Winstedt (1920 c, d). For the survey of traditional Malay literature see Kratz (forthcoming).

kept at Pusat Islam (estimated about 1200 manuscripts); in Sri Lanka about 100 manuscripts (Hussainmiya 1978, 1983); in Brunei (Harun Mat Piah and Ismail Hamid 1983) and at Aceh (Gallop 1994).

Even though there are a few studies on the lending libraries at Palembang (Kratz 1977); Jakarta (T.Iskandar 1981) and Batavia (Chambert-Loir 1984), we still know very little about the reading public and reading habits of the 19th and 20th centuries to formulate a view on the distribution pattern, sphere of influence or communicative network of the manuscript corpus.

Very much related to the above problems is the difficulty of asserting authenticity of the manuscripts and defining a text. Errors, modifications and changes in copying and recopying have been identified and highlighted. Therefore, more valid principles and systematic methods of edition have been suggested and discussed (Brakel 1979; Jones 1980; Kratz 1981; Jones and Rowntree 1983; and Robson 1988). Some the scholars have even proposed computerization as an effective method of editing in Malay philology (Kratz 1981; and Proudfoot 1991).

Another major problem is survival, conservation and accessibility of manuscripts. The existing methods of conservation and cataloguing are found to be erroneous, out-dated and confusing. Thus a more systematic, updated catalogue and standardised classification and universal list of manuscripts for easy retrieval and effective use has been suggested (Ding 1987).

The limitations of research methodology in oral tradition and the problems encountered in analyzing Malay manuscripts have shown us that a complete picture of Malay literary traditions is yet to be constructed. However, this chapter aims to find the key features of Malay literary conventions based on the existing findings and opinions. Nevertheless, this chapter is written with a full awareness of the complexity of the subject, and of the risk of making any sweeping generalisations or conclusions based on scanty findings and weak academic grounds.

MALAY NARRATIVE CONVENTIONS

Classification of Literary Genres

There are several methods of classifying genres of traditional Malay literature (Wilkinson 1907; Winstedt 1940; Liaw 1975; Braginsky 1993a; and Zalila Sharif and Jamilah Ahmad, 1993). Wilkinson (1907) uses the terms “romance” and “history” for traditional narratives.

Winstedt (1940) identifies genres of traditional narratives as follows:

- i. Beast fables
- ii. farcical tales
- iii. folk romances
- iv. the Indian epics
- v. the Hindu romances
- vi. the Javanese tales
- vii. Malay romances of the transition
- viii. Muslim legends
- ix. Muslim cycles of tales
- x. Malay histories
- xi. Syair

Liaw (1975, 1991, 1993) only develops Winstedt's categorization by providing more examples and detailed descriptions of each genre and its sub-genres. But Winstedt's and Wilkinson's classifications which are very much focused on external influences (Hindu, Islam and Javanese) whilst ignoring "local genius" and creativity, have been widely criticized (Ismail Hussein 1974; Sweeney 1990; Muhammad Haji Salleh 1988b; Kratz 1992a-65:103-105).

Another classification is by a team of Malay scholars for the Dewan Bahasa and Pustaka, who find that Winstedt's classification is "*tidak sistematis, tidak terperinci dan tidak menyeluruh*" (Harun Mat Piah 1993:11). They have attempted a more detailed categorization and thus are more specific in dividing the literature into two main categories: narrative and non-narrative types.⁶ The narrative type is grouped into two: oral and written narratives. Then, genres in each group are explained as follows:

Genres of Oral Narrative:

- i. Cerita asal-usul
- ii. Cerita binatang
- iii. Cerita Jenaka
- iv. Mitos and Legenda
- v. Cerita-cerita romantis atau lipur lara

⁶ See Zalila Sharif and Jamilah Hj. Ahmad, *Kesusasteraan Melayu Traditional* (1993). This book was written by a panel of writers: Harun Mat Piah, Ismail Hamid, Siti Hawa Salleh, Abu Hassan Sham, Abdul Rahman Kaeh and Jamilah Hj. Ahmad.

Genres of Written Narrative:

- i. Sastera Hikayat
- ii. Sastera Epik
- iii. Sastera Panji dan Perwayangan
- iv. Sastera Sejarah
- v. Kisah Para Nabi and Tokoh-tokoh Islam

However, the above classification has its own limitations and this has been readily admitted by the leader of the team:

“Pada pembahagian cerita dan bukan cerita juga, garis pemisahanya tidak semestinya tetap. Cerita atau ‘unsur cerita’ mungkin terdapat dalam golongan bukan cerita, misalnya dalam karya-karya yang bermotif pengajaran, termasuk karya-karya sufi misalnya, bentuk cerita terdapat sebagai anekdot dan interpolasi. Yang menjadi ukuran di sini ialah isi dan motif karya, misalnya pengajaran agama Islam, kewarganegaraan atau yang lain. Inilah yang membezakan penggolongan karya walaupun antara berbagai-bagai karya yang mendapat unsur-unsur yang sama” (Harun Mat Piah, 1993:15).

Braginsky sees traditional Malay literature as structured in a kind of hierarchical system. The contours of this system were determined by the configuration of hierarchically arranged functional spheres. There are three divisions of the literary system and each is sustained by its specific functions: the functional sphere of beauty, the functional sphere of benefit and the functional sphere of spiritual perfection. *“These functions were effectuated with the help of genre forms. Within the framework of the latter, genre proper took shape, as the expression of a monotypal content through a monotypal form. All genres were closely*

connected, both by the homogeneity of the issues emanating from the canonic centre of the literary system, namely the Qur'an and the Sunnah, and by the didactic components characteristics of each genre. Didactic content and style, though varied by genre, determined the continuity and integrity within the genre system, allowing coexistence of related genres and the borders between the functional spheres" (Braginsky 1993a:70).

He then gives another form of genre classification or genre structures:

1. The Sphere of Beauty
 - i. belletristic genres in both prose and verse
 - a. fantastic adventure *hikayat*
 - b. romantic *syair*
2. The Sphere of Benefits
 - i. literature of mirror (*Hidaya*)
 - a. mirrors proper (textbooks on ethics, worldly wisdom and statecraft)
 - b. frame stories
 - c. instructive anthologies and poems
 - ii. Historical literature
 - a. Historiography
 - b. Chronicles : dynastic chronicle
: panegyrical chronicle
3. The Sphere of Spiritual Perfection
 - i. Hagiography
 - a. romances about Islamic prophets
 - b. *hikayats* on Prophet Muhammad
 - c. *hikayats* on the contemporaries of Muhammad, his associates and his adversaries

- ii. The *Kitab*
- iii. The Sufi Literature (both prose and verse)
 - a. Sufi hagiography
 - b. Sufi Allegory
 - Poetry: a. hagiographic poems
 - b. *Kitab* poems
 - c. allegorical poems

Braginsky offers a superstructure perspective and a new categorisation. The above genre structure provides us with new terminologies for known genres and adds another dimension to genre classification (functional perspective). Nevertheless, it does not address the specific problems of narrative genres critically needed for our discussion, and thus we still do not yet have the system of classification of genre needed for the understanding of the subject.

In addition to functional and narrative-and-non-narrative denominators, the classification of Malay literature can be done by literary content or core themes. From this perspective, we can group the literature into three main categories: *istana* (court literature), *kampung* (folklore) and *agama* (*Kitab* literature). We may also divide these according to their form: prose or poetry; or based on modes of presentation: oral or written literature. Thus we have a variety of literary classifications according to different criteria of literary grouping. For more practical reasons, the scope of this study is narrowed down to one important aspect of the traditions: the narrative conventions.

IMPORTANCE OF NARRATIVE

Narrative is one of the most important categories of any literature. Every community or culture has its own narrative conventions. This universality of narrative has been clearly described by Barthes when he writes:

"the narrative is international, transhistorical, transcultural, it is simply there, like life itself" (Barthes 1966; also in Sontag 1993:252)

Narratology or the theory, discourse or critique of narration based on structuralist analysis was begun by Claude Levi-Strauss in his *Anthropologie structurale* (1958) when he advances a new theory about myth. This field is later developed by employing linguistics as its founding model.⁷

So far traditional Malay literature has been studied from four main approaches: thematic, sociological, structural and intertextuality.⁸ Malay narrative, especially Malay poetics, has only attracted a few studies and hence it is a relatively new field of research. Among the important contributors of the area are Sweeney, Kratz, Braginsky, Muhammad Hj.Saleh and Koster. The preceeding studies above have been useful as my basis of description of narrative conventions. Nevertheless, each of them has adopted a different approach or analysis, and to give a more representative picture of the subject, the central aspect which underlying the literature, the narrative itself, must be systematically analysed.

⁷ For informations and criticisms on structuralism see Culler (1975). For further readings on structural analysis of narrative refer to: Vladimir Propp (1928); Northrop Frye (1977); Levi-Strauss (1958); Greimas (1966); Bremond (1966); Barthes (1966); Kristeva (1971); Genette (1972); Foucoult (1977). For Russian Formalist Theory of Narrative see Jakobson (1960); Tomashevsky (1965); Shklovsky (1965); Todorov (1966) and Lotman (1964,1970,1972).

⁸ For more discussion on these perspectives see Muhammad Haji Salleh 1988:6-13.

To do this, I have employed and adapted Chatman's model of Narrative Structure. This model is a synthesis of Russian and French narratology and I find it the most suitable model or general framework for the analysis of Malay narrative conventions and innovations (Chatman 1978).

MODEL OF NARRATIVE STRUCTURE

The structuralist poetics is concerned with necessary components of the narrative and its arrangement or organisation. Narrative is seen as a product or result of interaction of different component levels. Each narrative consists of two parts: a story (*histoire*), the content or chain of events (action, happening), plus what may be called the existents (characters, items of setting); and a discourse (*discours*), that is, the expression or the means by which the content is communicated. In simple terms, the story is the WHAT in a narrative that is depicted, discourse the HOW (Chatman 1978).

THE INNER AND OUTER FORMS

Genre, according to Warren and Wellek, should be conceived “*as a grouping of literary work based, theoretically, upon both outer form (specific metre or structure) and also upon inner form (attitude, tone, purpose- more crudely, subject and audience)*” (1957:231). Clearly from the above methods of classification, we may conclude, at least for the time being, that traditional Malay narratives are differentiated not only by outer but also by inner form.

What are the main conventions of these narratives? We shall analyse the key features of the conventions based on dual perspectives: the inner and outer forms. From the inner

perspective, we shall discuss its concept of author and authorship, notion of self, dominant themes and narrative functions. For the outer form, the focus will be on its compositional structure, literary devices and narrative techniques employed.

Concepts of Author and Authorship

An exploratory study on the Malay concept of author and authorship has been attempted by Muhammad Haji Salleh (1988 and 1991). Based on the *mukadimah* (prologue) of *Sejarah Melayu*, *Taj us-Salatin* and *Hikayat Isma Yatim*, he has reconstructed and formulated the concepts within the author's tradition, surroundings and society. Muhammad raises several important questions pertaining to the author: his origins, the contemporary concept of talent, his social and literary environment, his political environment, his creative process, level of involvement, his concept of the literary work of art, his functions and his values (Muhammad Haji Salleh 1991b:66).

The Malay word for the practical making of a literary work is "*mengarang*". It seems to be an old word with a certain development in meaning over the centuries (Marsden 1812, Wilkinson 1902; Za'ba 1934). Za'ba's description has been accepted as the most lucid and enlightening:

2. *Perkataan 'karang' itu terpakai pada barang apa yang berbunga-bunga dengan indah susunannya dan aturnya serta berpatutan cabang-cabangnya dan pecahan-pecahannya antara satu dengan satu; seperti batu karang dilaut.*

Dari situ dibawa kepada pekerjaan mengubah bunga, atau mereka ukiran, atau membuat barang suatu ang cantik, dikeluarkan dari dalam hati sendiri serta baharu, yakni bukan meniru yang telah dibuat orang. Dari situ pula dipinjamah

dibawa kepada pekerjaan menyusun perkataan dengan susunan yang elok kerana menghalkan atau mempekarakan sesuatu fikiran hati atau sesuatu kisah cerita supaya dapat difahamkan oleh orang-orang lain apabila didengar atau dibaca mereka susunan itu.

3. *Perkataan-perkataan yang telah disusunkan beberapa lanjutnya demikian itu dinamakan 'karangan'. Maka itulah makna yang khas terletak pada perkataan karang, mengarang, karangan dan lain-lain pecahannya itu jika pada medan menggunakan bahasa dan surat-menyurat. (Za'ba 1965:1)*

Therefore, Za'ba relates the word *mengarang* with whatever was “*arranged in a beautiful design with its parts also aesthetically composed*”. Za'ba's definition according to Muhammad, “*fitted in well with the traditional meaning of this word, except that he introduced a new element, i.e. the work should be a new product of desire and emotion. For him the emotion, aesthetic sensitivity, talent for design, colour and beauty play important roles.*” (Muhammad Haji Salleh 1991b:104).

The traditional Malay author was a very mysterious creature, who existed only in his text and took the form of almost specific people, but generalised under the term “*yang empunya cerita*” (possessor of the story), “*sahibul hikayat*” (he who owns the story) and the like (Muhammad Haji Salleh 1991b:19,100). Muhammad identifies two groups of Malay authors. In the first group are the authors of written works who consist of two categories of important pillars of the community: the nobility such as the prime minister (Tun Sri Lanang), the adviser to the King (Isma Yatim) and even the prince (Raja Chulan); and in the

other the religious scholars (*ulama*) such as Hamzah Fansuri and Nurrudin Al-Raniri. The second group consists of the oral authors or composers, who normally are the pawangs (*shaman*), puppeteers, the village chiefs, the story tellers and the midwives. These oral authors also occupy important places in their small communities and at the peak of this social order they carried the burden of disseminating knowledge to the society (1991b:103). So the traditional authors were important intellectual and religious personages who contributed substantially to the life of their society. The special social status of author is also reinforced by Sweeney when he considers the Raja's court as the traditional centre of literacy, and penmanship as an exclusive skill which raised the position of court author as a specialist (Sweeney 1980a).

Therefore in traditional Malay society, "the author" had a different definition from the ones usually employed at present. Muhammad finds that the definition used by St. Bonaventure in the 13th century in Europe is suitable to define Malay traditional author:

"There are four ways of making a book. Sometimes, a man writes others' words, adding nothing and changing nothing; and he is simply called a scribe (scriptor). Sometimes a man writes others' words, putting together passages which are not his own; and he is called a compiler (compiler). Sometimes a man writes both others' words and his own, but with others' words in prime place and his own added only for the purpose of clarification, and he is called not an author but a commentator (commentator). Sometimes a man writes both his own words and others', but his own in prime place and others' added only for the purpose of confirmation and be called an author (auctor)." (Muhammad Haji Salleh 1991b:103)

He finds that the concept of authorship in Medieval Europe exhibited some similarities with the concept of the author in the early chirographic age, when the copyist, editor, commentator and the one who composed an original work were all involved in authorship. Malay tradition, according to him, “ *tended to consider a piece of literary creation as a property of community, immediately after it has initially been composed. In the works that have survived to our day we find the fragments, styles and plots of various versions. They are versions of other versions, thus invariably having relationship with conglomerate authorship.*” (Muhammad Haji Salleh 1991b:3).

This concept of shared authorship or joint-ownership was discussed by Sweeney in schematic composition. He explains that the authors and tellers of traditional literature composed their works, according to the schematic patterns of tradition but they did not consider themselves as the owners of the schema. Thus, this explains the anonymity and the concept of shared authorship. Therefore, the process of literary creation and even consumption were considered communal activities (Sweeney 1980a:25).

This convention of shared authorship was described by Baroroh Baried et.al. (Baried 1985:50) as follows:

“Beberapa konvensi dalam sastra hikayat dapat dijelaskan melalui gambaran keadaan masyarakat lama yang ditemukan oleh takdir. Sebagai contoh sifat anonim sastra hikayat dapat diterangkan dengan latar belakang sifat masyarakat yang tampak dalam kehidupan sehari-hari, yaitu bahawa antara anggota masyarakat ‘sangat bermurah hati, pandang memandang, tanggung menanggung, yang seorang tidak berhitung benar kepada yang lain, sering kepunyaan seseorang merupakan kepunyaan yang lain’. Sifat masyarakat

yang demikian inilah yang memungkin orang segan menonjolkan namanya khususnya dalam bidang karang-mengarang, dia tidak menginginkan hasil karyanya sebagai milik sendiri, tetapi diserahkan sebagai milik masyarakat. Masyarakat bebas menambah, mengurangi atau memperbaiki suatu hasil sastra kerana merasa turut bertanggungjawab akan kelangsungan nilainya. Mereka merasa turut memilikinya. Keaslian bukan merupakan tuntutan ketinggian nilai sastra, seperti yang dituntut oleh penilaian sastra moden.”

This tradition and social context did not require the Malay author to describe his literary struggle or introduce himself at length. *“a work of art was a communal one, produced from its literary heritage by a writer and presented to that community which may lengthen or shorten, reinterpret and edit it as it felt right. A writer was only temporarily the original writer before his work was rewritten or recreated. In such a flux of authorship and in a community where individual must subordinate his existence to the community’s, what need was there to append one’s name to a work? Furthermore, the whole istana, palace, or village would know anyway who the author was without him inscribing his name. It was a very small world.”* (Muhammad Haji Salleh 1991b:75).

The ideal norms and values of traditional Malay society, according to Sweeney, are uniformity and conventionality. Social cohesion is valued highly, more than individualism and originality in composition. Hence the writer or story teller is limited by his conditioning to the norms and values of his own society. This has led to an absence of the constant striving for originality:

“the natural corollary of the society’s aversion to individualism was a total absence of the constant striving for originality of composition, which is a basic criterion of good

literature in Western society." (Sweeney 1980a:25). He adds that, *"Although the ideal norm of traditional Malay society was uniformity and conventionality, every writer naturally possessed a variety of personal idiosyncracies. However the nature of his postulated audience would encourage him from expressing unorthodox views in writing."* (Sweeney 1980a:27). Sweeney, however, finds exceptions in works which were translated from a foreign language, or by writers of foreign origin such as Nurrudin ar-Raniri and works which were written by Malay writers who were steeped in foreign tradition such as Hamzah Fansuri.

Muhammad Haji Salleh, on the other hand, thinks otherwise. He believes that there are many elements of proof found in the Malay literary works which show how Malay traditional society also makes room and allowances for the talent and originality of its composers and artists (Muhammad Haji Salleh 1991b:96). This is shown in the flexible concept of the text in literature, which may be bent according to the needs of the author, his age and situation:

"this was the concept that made possible the growth of a literature so bound by tradition, enriched by personal insights, interpretation of history or the different phenomena and a language that was always new. Without the flexibility perhaps Malay literature would be very much poorer than what it is now." (Muhammad Haji Salleh 1991b:98).

On the oral narratives which are often described as formulaic works that have ready moulds, Muhammad's responses to Sweeney's statements is this:

"But as an author who cannot deny power of creative imagination and one who listens, again dialogically, to his talent, sense of language, and his own self, must react to

this formulaic tradition. While he must generally keep to the highway of this tradition, he may make his own detours, watch the view on the way and describe them for his readers...He is an active agent of the oral literature. However, an old story without contemporary significance is a dead story, one that cannot please or entertain his audience. It is true that many of the stories carry a universal and timeless significance, but his words that tend to push them into their significance are as important. They use them a new life, a new aspect of meaning that may be used for the present. In that way he helps to not only keep the story alive but give it a new life so that it may be continued, as it has been done by his predecessors.” (Muhammad Haji Salleh 1991b:60).

Notion of Self

From his analysis of the prologue of *Sejarah Melayu*, Muhammad derives at the author's sense of beginning, self-definition, and sense of purpose. A traditional Malay author normally began his work with invocations usually composed as ritual praise of God, the prophets, prophet Muhammad and the specific powers that directly influence a person. The listing of the qualities of God is a kind of lesson and reminder for the author and his readers and also helps him to orientate himself. Then he introduced himself in a very indirect manner and in the most humble fashion possible. His sense of humility is shown by his use of the pronoun “*fakir*” when referring to himself, which means a person of a very poor means or of very limited abilities or someone destitute. This humility is seen from the cosmic point of view in which God has knowledge of everything and man only of a little. He sees a binary pull in this *mukadimah* which shows that the author was partly proud to append his name and those of his ancestors and on the other hand he was partly ashamed to state his responsibility, especially when his name was mentioned. This, according to

Muhammad, was the vague early point of individualization in Malay literary tradition in the seventeenth century (Muhammad Haji Salleh 1991b:101).

The tendency for self-effacement among Malay authors perhaps lies in the literary decorum of the Malays and the Muslim world and the need not to detain the reader on the good points of one's achievement. Muhamad finds that competition is seen in the demonstration of who is more humble. *"We are in the area of the tradition not of 'one-upmanship' but rather of 'one-downmanship'"* (Muhammad Haji Salleh 1991b:73).

Braginsky observes that literary self-awareness was awakened by and the concept of authorship only developed with deepening religious awareness among the Malays in the beginning of the first half of the 16th century. The exposition of principles of Islamic theology and the interpretation of the entire corpus of Malay literature in line with the conception of Islam led to the role of individual authorship becoming more pronounced.

"This process of self-reflection and re-imagining affected such notions as the creative process, the function of beauty, the didactic value of literature and the modes for creating literary works. In a word, this period saw the emergence of self-awareness in Malay literature." (Braginsky 1993a:29).

The concept of authorship, according to him, originated from the *Kitab* literature, and sufi literature played a significant role in the shaping of Malay literature and self-awareness:

"Thus, Malay letters was losing its anonymity in the course of Islamization, and authorship was becoming acknowledged and claimed in accordance with the position which the various genres occupy within the hierarchy of the Muslim literary system: the higher their ranking, the greater the percentage with named authors." (Braginsky 1993a:69).

The influence of the *kitab* literature on the Malay authorship had been observed earlier by Roolvink (1971).

According to him:

"It is this genre of literature that has exercised a considerable influence on the Malay language. The greater part of this literature was reworked and translated from Arabic, in several cases in Mecca and Medina, by people from Indonesia for the benefit of those of their compatriots at home who had no knowledge of Arabic. The author's and translators' names of a number of works of this kind are known, and it is here that Malay literature somewhat loses its characteristic anonymity. In accordance with Arabic custom these authors used to add to their names a word indicating their place of origin, so that their names are followed by such words as al-Palimbani, al-Bandjari, al-Samatra'i, al-Fansuri, al-Buni, al-Makasari, al-Kalantani, al-Fatani, and so on." (Roolvink 1971:1232-3)

Traditional Narrative Functions

Traditional Malay narratives were produced with a variety of literary functions, and specific variants of the functions are manifested in specific literary genres. From the *mukadimah* of *Sejarah Melayu*, we know that the responsibilities of its author were to speak the truth and to write a moral history. Thus, the writing was both a religious and social act. This was a

great task, bringing with it certain fears and doubts for the author who faced such a great burden:

"Setelah mendengar demikian, jadi beratlah atas anggota fakir allazi murakkabun'alajahlihi"

The portrait of Malay author is portrayed in the **Hikayat Isma Yatim**, which has been regarded as "*almost a treatise on the theory of a writer, his functions, his work and aesthetics*" and even though it is not a realistic work, the *Hikayat* shows "*the ideal writer in the ideal situation*" (Muhammad Haji Salleh 1991b:88,102). From this *Hikayat* and the narratives discussed earlier, we may generalize that traditional Malay narratives served communal functions more than personal ones.

Koster (1993) has categorized and thus simplified the narrative functions into two: either predominantly 'profitable' or principally 'soothing'. The profitable stories are those which were felt to be concerned directly with upholding the Malay religious, political or social order. eg. the *Sejarah Melayu* (Genealogy of the Malay Rulers). On the other hand the soothing stories were above all enjoyed for their beauty, rhetorical power and fantasy, which afforded momentary relief from the unpleasant realities of life.eg. *Syair Ken Tambuhan* (Poem of Lady-in-Waiting Tambuhan)

He gives two types of narrative roles for each category: firstly the *dalang* (puppeteer) and secondly, the *dagang* (stranger/trader far from home), taken from the terms most often used in the literature for self-characterization. The *dalang* appears in the epic *Wayang* stories and *Panji* romances and is an embodiment of the force of

orality which is associated with forgetfulness and illusions (from an Islamic perspective). The *Dagang*, on the other hand, according to Koster, appeared only in written genres and not in oral forms, and hence is a manifestation of literacy which was associated with remembrance of God and edification:

"In different ways both narrators are expression of the commemorative nature of Malay poetics in that they are both agreed that for man in all his acts, reading and writing included, wisdom and divine guidance are indispensable." (Koster 1993:7)

Koster sees that the two conflicting forces of orality and literacy are pressed into coherence by what may be called the Idea of book : the notion that all production of meaning, if it is to be valid, must emphatically claim to point back to and to have been authorized by an already codified, unassailable truth or origin (Koster 1993:78-79). Therefore, Koster relates and traces the functions and meanings of Malay literature to the concept of God or religion.

Concept of Beauty (*Indah*)

Another key feature of the inner form of Malay narrative is its concept of beauty. The study of the Malay literary aesthetics has been explored by Braginsky (1979, 1993a) and Muhammad Hj.Salleh (1986:3-18, 1991b).

This concept of beauty, according to Braginsky, is *"denoted by the term indah, and believed to be a manifestation in the 'world of things', literary works included, of Allah absolute beauty. The beautiful was conceived as something unusual (for example ajaib, gharib), whose plenitude or diversity of manifestation is duly ordered (dikarang) or*

harmonized (merdu). Because it is unusual, the beautiful arrests the recipient's attention and induces love (berahi) of itself in the recipient's soul. The soul was believed to be especially keen in its reaction to the sound of beautiful music or orderly speech, that is, to literary work. Sometimes such love may be so strong that it can cause a disrapture of the soul's proper structure and a state of shock, or a loss of consciousness (lupa, merca). For only when rationally arranged and rationally perceived may the beautiful exercise a psychotherapeutic effect (penghibur/penglipur) on the soul which is passionately attracted to it, dispelling depression, dismay and other such conditions" (Braginsky 1993a:35-6).

Muhammad finds that Braginsky's interpretation of the Malay-Muslim concept of beauty is limited to **Hikayat Isma Yatim** and works of the same nature and age (1991b:109). He thinks that we need to look at more original and home-grown concepts of beauty than foreign influences, and suggests a return to the penglipur lara stories, the *pantun*, *mantera*, and *jampi* (incantations) that abounded before the coming of foreign influences. His own study reveals certain basic values in the Malay narrative: a beautiful work of art tells a real life; it is usually linked to the original, which is composed by its first author and therefore closer to the source of truth; its episodic style of narration; heavily interspersed with magical scenes, along with characters brought to earth in extraordinary circumstances and manner; and its dramatic quality and the fact that it is "never monotonous". In his study of the values of beautiful *pantun*, he discovers that the composers see the values to be compactness of meaning and form; a melodious quality; and 'kesederhanaan' (simplicity) and 'kesesuaian' (appropriateness) in language, metaphor, and form as the measurement of a beautiful literary work (Muhammad Haji Salleh 1991b:108).

Both studies are actually complementary to each other as they explain different genres of literature. Muhammad, who focuses on the oral conventions, the *kampung*-type of literature, emphasizes the values of “*kesederhanaan*” and “*kesesuaian*” and the functional objectives of oral literature as a mirror of truth and reality of ordinary people’s life which the audience could learn from and enjoy as an escape from their suffering, hard, life. On the other hand, Braginsky, based on the written conventions, the *court* and *Kitab* literatures, has given an Islamic interpretation of aesthetics, which reinforces the Divine Power and God’s infinite riches (*kekayaan Allah*) with the diversity of unusual, strange, unique, wonderful and perfect creations and God himself as the Source of *Keindahan* (beauty) and *Keelokan* (goodness). This concept of *indah* is in complete agreement with general Muslim interpretations and the principal notions of Muslim aesthetics (Braginsky 1993a:76-91).

The Malay concepts of beauty in literature, as defined above, have influenced not only the inner form (for example in terms of the notion of truth) but also its outer form. Malay conventional narratives have specific outer forms or discourse which are regarded as “*sesuai*” (appropriate), “*sederhana*” (simple), “*elok*” (good) or “*patut*” (proper) as attributes or values of “*indah*”, the beautiful works, which will be explained further under the discussion of discourse.

Another aspect of inner forms is the theme. Conventional Malay narrative is said to be court centred, which is one of its dominant themes.

DOMINANT THEMES

Feudal Society and Court Centrism

Traditional Malay society like many other traditional societies is a monocentric society. It is governed by a single system of belief and culture (*adab* and *adat*). Culture can be defined as a system of life which covers and governs all aspects of life, such as society, economics, politics, art and literature, and religion and philosophy. Traditional Malay culture and ethos are based on the feudal system of values and are clearly manifested in their narrative texts: oral or written and, fictional and historical.

The court or *istana* was the centre for Malay traditional narratives. Even in oral literature, we have folk romances (*cerita lipurlara*) which tell of the life of a protagonist who is usually a handsome, strong and magical prince and his most beautiful princess. Examples are *Hikayat Malim Deman*, *Hikayat Terung Pipit* and *Hikayat Raja Muda*. Even if the hero of the romance did not originate from a royal family, he still ended his life in the *istana* by marrying a princess. Examples are, *Awang Golok Besar* and *Pendekar Bujang* (Jamilah Ahmad 1993).

For written narratives, we have fantastic adventure *hikayats* and romantic *syair* which are normally about the love and adventures of a royal couple in search of each other. We may include bellestristic genres in both prose and verse deriving from Hindu-Javanese and Arab-Persian sources, such as the *Hikayat Inderaputera*, *Hikayat Berma Syahdan*, *Hikayat Koris Mengindra*, *Hikayat Syah Mardan* and *Panji* Tales. For narrative poetry or *syair*, *Syair Bidasari* and *Syair Selindung Delima*, for example, also centred on life in the court and its immediate circle. There are numerous dynastic chronicles written to describe

the Malay kingdoms and court lives. Examples of the dynastic chronicles are: *Hikayat Raja Pasai*, *Hikayat Aceh*, *Sejarah Melayu*, *Hikayat Merong Mahawangsa*, *Hikayat Banjar*, *Misa Melayu*, *Hikayat Pahang*, *Hikayat Johor*, *Hikayat Patani*, *Hikayat Seri Kelantan*, *Sejarah Raja-Raja Riau*, *Hikayat Siak*, *Salasilah Melayu dan Bugis*, *Salasilah Kutai*, *Hikayat Bengkulu* and *Salasilah Raja-Raja Pasai*.⁹

To discuss the dominant conventional themes of *istana* in the conventions, we have selected a few traditional texts which describe the two great Malay *kerajaan* (kingdoms) and their court life - the Pasai-Samudra kingdom in Sumatera, and the Malacca Sultanate. They are the *Hikayat Raja Pasai*, *Hikayat Hang Tuah* and *Sejarah Melayu*.

The oldest Malay historical narrative or dynastic chronicle is the *Hikayat Raja Pasai* (Hill 1960; Alfian 1973; Jones 1987; Kratz 1989; Braginsky 1994). Hence it is relevant and interesting to use this *Hikayat* to illustrate the theme of court centrism in traditional narrative.¹⁰

HIKAYAT RAJA PASAI AS EXAMPLE OF A COURT NARRATIVE

Hikayat Raja Pasai provides a complete picture of the cultural and feudal system of the Pasai-Samudera Sultanate: its origin, evolution from a simple agricultural settlement to a great kingdom and later its disintegration and downfall. *Istana* is often described as a special place of honour and full of grandeur. The life of all the rulers in *istana* becomes the central focus of its story or events and existents of the narrative.

⁹ For discussions on some of these texts see Muhammad Yusoff Hashim (1992).

¹⁰ Matheson has written about customs and traditional protocol of Malay courts in 16th, 17th and 18th centuries based on six dynastic histories: *Undang-Undang Melaka*, *Sulalatus-Salafin or Sejarah Melayu*, *Hikayat Hang Tuah*, *Hikayat Patani*, *Hikayat Banjar* and *Misa Melayu*. (Matheson 1980:183-195).

The role of the Sultan or King was most important for responsibility for the survival of his Kingdom rested almost entirely on his shoulders. He was the supreme power who was divinely chosen to keep the cosmic and social order of his kingdom. The ideal king was regarded as "*dewaraja*" during the Hindu period and as "*khalifah Allah*" in the Islamic period. To perform such great tasks, he needed proper legitimation to prove that he was the real ruler. His origin had to show his supernatural element, divinity and noble character, and this explains various myths of origin created in many historical narratives.¹¹

The complete rites of passage of a King in *istana* are clearly portrayed in the **Hikayat Raja Pasai**. It describes the wedding custom (*Adat berjaga-jaga*); the royal birth; the circumcision custom (*berkhatan*); the royal coronation (*adat pertabalan diraja*); the conferment of royal titles to ministers and other officers etc.

The description of the rites of passage of a King is not complete without a manifestation of his extraordinary physical beauty or strength. In *Hikayat Raja Pasai*, the physical beauty of Tun Abdul Jalil is expressed as follows:

"Adapun akan Tun Abdul Jalil itu baik rupanya dan parasnya, tiada berbagai pada masa itu; jikalau ia berdiri di pintu tani maka berserilah pintu itu, dan jikalau ia berdiri di lepau yang bernama dalkhana itu, maka berserilah rupa dalkhana itu, dan jikalau ia berdiri di pekan nescaya bercahayalah segala pekan itu daripada amat elok rupanya, dan jikalau ia memakai cara Jawa serupa Jawa, dan jika ia memakai cara Keling serupa Keling, dan jika ia memakai cara Arab serupa Arab" (Jones 1987:37).

¹¹ For an interesting study on the Malay myths of origin see Ras (1968).

The King was not only the centre of customs (*adat istiadat*), but also a dominant force for economic activities. Pasai was an agricultural society and the *Hikayat* told the story of Merah Silu and his buffaloes, to explain the origin of its agricultural activities. The discovery of gold mining by a *saudagar Keling* also explained why mining was an important economic activity. The social and recreational life of King also been described. We know that these Pasai royalties enjoyed interesting outdoor activities such as elephant hunting (*menjerat gajah*), picnic (*bermain-main tepi pantai*) and also traveling.

The power of the King was not only manifested culturally but also in the political domain. The great political power of Pasai is shown by the expansion of its political domains: from the opening of settlements (Samarlanga, Biruan), to the expansion of the kingdom (by attacking Rimba Jerana, Pertama Terjun, Gunung Telawas, Pekersang, Kumat). Initially it was named Samudera, but with the coming of Islam it became Negeri Darussalam. From the narrative we find that there were two methods of political expansion: attacking and hunting. Pasai itself was founded while the King was hunting. Several aetiological stories (of the origin of places) of the Kingdom are told; for example, the story of Pasai which was named after a dog; and Samudera which was named after "*semut yang amat besar*" etc.

The supreme power of the King and his great kingdom was not complete without external legitimation. This could be done through a communicative network with the external world. In the *Hikayat*, contacts were established by marriage (with Perlak), by trade and culture (with India), and by political confrontation (with Siam and Majapahit). The peak of the Kingdom of Pasai was shown when it won the war with Siam, but its downfall

was illustrated when it lost the war with Majapahit. Therefore, we get a complete cycle of the kingdom or dynasty in the *Hikayat* and its political philosophy and history.

Conventional Theme of Loyalty

The central force or dominant rule which governed life of *istana* and traditional Malay society is the concept of loyalty based on the well known covenant of *Bukit Siguntang* agreed upon between Sri Tri Buana and Demang Lebar Daun. This original agreement defined and formulated the relationship between the Malay ruler and his subject. Kratz interprets the relationship as follows:

“loyalty and respect are qualities which have to work in both directions, to and from the ruler, in order to affect positively the well-being of state and society. Thus, while the ruler’s role and place appear paramount- he is the symbol of the state and its well-being as well as its ultimate earthly arbiter and guarantor of harmony and welfare - this does not absolve him from taking due note of and showing consideration for the views and reputations of those who serve him. In fact government can only work properly if the two respect each other’s role in the order of things and both act only in agreement with and reference to each other “ (Kratz 1993:77).

This concept of loyalty is clearly illustrated and developed in *Sejarah Melayu* and *Hikayat Hang Tuah* (Kratz 1993; Braginsky 1993). There are several interpretations of this concept (Kassim Ahmad 1966; Errington 1975; Muhammad Haji Salleh 1985; Josselin de Jong 1986). However, Kratz adds another dimension to the subject when he gives an interesting analysis of the institutional relationship between Sultan, Bendahara and laksamana Hang Tuah. He writes:

“According to the Hikayat Hang Tuah the country prospers most when ruler and Bendahara work in harmony...Hang Tuah is one of the Bendahara’s men. Eventually, and only with the Bendahara’s consent, Hang Tuah rises to the position of Laksamana. In institutional terms the office of the Laksamana has to be seen at that time as an extension of the Bendahara’s office, and the Laksamana as the Bendahara’s agent and representative....As long as ruler, Bendahara and laksamana are in total accord and harmony, Melaka prospers” (Kratz 1993:78-79).

This concept of loyalty is also manifested in other Malay dynastic chronicles or historical narratives. Similar relationships are illustrated in *Hikayat Raja Pasai* through two important personalities: the Prime minister, Sayid Semayamuddin and Tun Berahim Bapa, the Sultan’s son.

Sultan Malikul Mansur took a girl from the palace of his brother, Sultan Malikul Mahmud. His prime minister, Sayid Semayamuddin tried to advise him against doing this without his brother’s consent:

“Ya tuanku Shah Alam, betapa perinya duli tuanku pergi bermain-main ke tepi laut, karna paduka kekanda Sultan Malikul Mahmud tiada ada dalam negeri Pasai, karna jalan dari sana daripada sisi kakanda itu, takut siapa tahu keluar datang fitnah syaitan kepada hati manusia, jika kedengaran kepada paduka kakanda tak dapat tiada jadi perseteruan akibatnya” (Jones 1987:29-30).

His sultan did not heed his advice and this consequently led to his arrest by his brother. Sultan Malikul Mansur was sent away to Temiang, but his prime minister was given a chance to serve the new ruler, Sultan Malikul Mahmud:

"Maka sabda Sultan, "Hai Semayamuddin, maukah engkau diam di sini bersama-sama dengan aku atau tidakkah?" Maka ia berdatang sembah," Ya tuanku Shah Alam, jika patik diceraikan dengan tuan patik Shah Alam ceraikan badan patik dengan kepala patik." Maka disuruh Sultan penggallah lehernya, maka dipenggal oranglah lehernya. Maka disuruh oleh Sultan kepalanya buangkan ke laut dan badannya disuruh sulakan di Kuala Pasai." (Jones 1987:32).

Sayid Semayamuddin's total loyalty to his King is not only expressed during his life but also after his death when his head followed his Sultan's boat. The episode was not only symbolic, but also had led the Sultan to search for his body and to arrange a proper burial for him. Soon, Sultan Malikul Mahmud regretted his action against his brother and requested him to return. Before leaving for Samudera to meet his brother, Sultan Mansur visited Sayid Semayamuddin's graveyard. He offered his greetings and prayers to him. His greeting was answered by a voice coming from the grave and the voice also asked him not to go. Sultan Mansur made his ablutions and performed a short prayer. There, he died while praying. The story of Sayid Semayamuddin and his Sultan illustrates not only the concept of total loyalty of a prime minister to his King, but also complete harmony between the two.

The greatest test and expression of loyalty in the narrative may be best manifested by Tun Berahim Bapa, who might be seen as a proto-type of Laksamana Hang Tuah. Tun

Berahirim Bapa was one of the sons of Sultan Ahmad Perumudal Perumal, who just like Hang Tuah, epitomizes not only physical strength but also unquestioning loyalty to his ruler. With his unchallenged strength and skills, he safeguarded Pasai from the insults of the warriors of Kalinga. Unfortunately, his action in rescuing his own two sisters from his cruel and incestuous father cost him his own life. Sultan Ahmad attempted several ways and means of killing his son as revenge. Tun Berahirim Bapa was well aware of his father's intentions but still obeyed all his orders. The peak of his obedience and loyalty was shown in a dramatic and moving episode in which he was given poisoned *penyiaran* by the Sultan.

"Maka Tun Berahirim Bapa pun tahulah akan racun itu, maka diambilnya penyiaran itu sebiji dibelah dua, sebelah dilontarkannya pada anjing. Maka dimakannya oleh anjing itu, maka seketika itu jua ia mati, dan yang sebelah itu maka dilotarkannya pula kepada hayam, maka hayam itu pun mati jua, maka Tun Berahirim Bapa pun fikir dalam hatinya, 'Jikalau kumakan makanan ini nescaya matilah aku, jikalau tiada kumakan nescaya derhakalah aku, tetapi baiklah aku mati daripada nama derhaka'" (Jones 1987:56).

The expression of his loyalty was not only done through interior monologues as shown above, but also manifested in three dialogues between him and his people, his captains (*hulubalang*) and Malik Kasan (*hulubalang* who was his loyal assistant) in which he expressed and repeated similar phrases:

"Maka kata Tun Berahirim Bapa, 'Diamlah tuan-tuan sekalian, karna SiBerahirim Bapa sekali-kali tiada is mau derhaka, jikalau SiBerahirim Bapa mau derhaka jika Pasai se-Pasainya, jika Jawa se-Jawanya, jika Cina se-Cinanya, jika Siam se-Siamnya, jika Keling

se-Kelingnya, tiada dapat melawan SiBeraim Bapa. Jika tiada aku kerajaan [di] dunia ini di akhirat pun aku peroleh jua. ’” (Jones 1987:50)

See also Jones 1987:57, 59.

The death of Tun Beraim Bapa meant the loss of Pasai’s strength. Later, Pasai was defeated by Majapahit. Sultan Ahmad regretted his cruel actions against his children, but it was too late as he had already lost his kingdom:

“Maka sabda Sultan, ‘Wah anakku Beraim Bapa, jikalau ada ia, jika Jawa se-Jawanya, jika Cina se-Cinanya, jika Keling se-Kelingnya tiada mau melawan SiBeraim Bapa. ’” (Jones 1987:67)

Just like *Hikayat Hang Tuah*, *Hikayat Raja Pasai* may be considered as a citizen’s mirror of conduct as well as guidance on proper etiquette and manners at court to the subjects of the Malay ruler. The moral message of *Hikayat Raja Pasai* was directed as much at the ruler as it was at his subjects (Kratz 1993:68). Sultan Ahmad had dishonoured the spirit of Bukit Siguntang which commanded loyalty and respect from the ruler and his subject. Far from appreciating his subject’s loyalty (represented by Tun Beraim Bapa), he abused it for his own evil interests. Finally, he had to pay with his Kingdom and at the same time lost the respect of his own prime minister, Tun Perpatih Tulus Agung Tukang Sukara, who twice recited to him a sarcastic *pantun* which subtly criticized his cruel behaviour:

Lada siapa dibangsalkan?

Selama lada sekerati

Pada siapa disesalkan?

Tuan juga empunya pekerti.

(Jones 1987:65,67)

After analysing the main features of the inner form of Malay narratives, let us look at its outer forms, the discourse. Here, we shall focus on the compositional structure, narrative styles and techniques and the literary devices employed by the writers. Generally, the narratives, either oral or written, were composed and presented based on certain schematic or formulaic devices, which shall be explained further.

Malay Narrative Discourse

Sweeney is the first scholar who has expressed the need to study Malay discourse as a whole to understand any aspect of Malay oral and written composition. He has devoted his research to oral discourse and has come out with insightful findings. In his fieldwork study of Malay story-telling or oral narratives in 1968-1978, he found that the professional story-tellers, the *penglipur lara*, use specific styles and forms of presentation of oral literature which he describes as stylized forms of language and presentation which are different from everyday conversation:

"We find that oral tradition has developed stylized forms of language and presentation, which also differ considerably from those of everyday speech. This stylized oral form, as regards language, is best seen in the most developed genres of oral literature, such as wayang kulit and Mak yong, where the use of distortions of grammar and pronunciation, special wayang words and phrases, and various other devices, results in a 'heightened' form of the local dialect." (Sweeney 1973:49).

Sweeney does not confine the stylized form to the style of language. He explains that, *"a presentation of oral narrative literature in stylized form is not just recital but will, depending upon the genre in question, employ other media of communication such as*

singing, musical accompaniment and drama which, from our modern view point, constitute separate art forms, but which, in oral Malay tradition, are fused together in the totality of the art." (Sweeney 1973:49).

Even the intonation and delimitation of stretches of utterance in professional story-telling, according to him, are not those of normal speech. *"the tales are sung, chanted or recited, and the length of each utterance is geared to the phrase of the melody or the rhythm of the recitation."* (Sweeney 1973:61). He gives two basic techniques used: the "repetitive" and the "varied". The repetitive technique is when the performer sings and intones his story using only one basic pattern of melody, which he repeats over and over again for the duration of the performance and most genres of Malay story-telling are presented using this technique. In the second technique, the performer sings, chants and employs the intonation of normal speech; his singing and chanting are not confined to one set of patterns and he has far more scope for improvisation. He gives the Kelantan-Petani tarik Selampit as an example of this "varied" technique (Sweeney 1973:62).

The narrative style and presentation of amateur storytellers, however, is different from that of the professional ones. In his study of "The Pak Pandir Cycle of Tales", conducted over the period of three years (1971-1973), Sweeney (1976) finds that the amateur storyteller, who does not expect any reward for his telling, tells his stories in a non-stylized form, i.e., in the language of everyday speech. He also finds that factors such as age, sex, marital and social status of tellers and listeners are important in determining what tales are told and how they are told.

The “oral” nature of written discourse is also observed by Sweeney. He explains that the written word was intended to be heard and not read. The recitation of works in classical Malay was an art form in itself. The reciter did not dramatize his text, but intoned it in a rhythmic monotone which is very similar to a presentation of stylized oral literature composed in performance. Therefore, the author, in the process of writing, would have had the rhythm of the chant in his mind, and it bounds with parallelisms (Sweeney 1980a:16).

Events in Malay Narratives

The events of a story are traditionally said to constitute an array called a “plot”. Structuralist narrative theory argues that the arrangement of these events is precisely the operation performed by discourse. The events in a story are turned into a plot by its discourse, the modus of presentation. Its order of presentation can be chronological or logical.¹²

What is the compositional structure, or the way events are organised in Malay narratives?

¹² Chatman makes distinctions between the classical and modern narratives:

“In classical narratives, events occur in distributions: they are linked to each other as cause and effect, effects in turn causing other effects, until the final effect... In traditional narrative of resolution, there is a sense of problem-solving, of things being worked out in some way, of a kind of ratiocinative or emotional teleology. Roland Barthes uses the term ‘hermeneutic’ to describe this function, which ‘articulate[s] in various ways a question or delay its answer’. ‘What will happen?’ is the basic question. In the modern plot of revelation, however, the emphasis is elsewhere: the function of the discourse is not to answer that question nor even to pose it. Early on we gather that things will stay pretty much the same. It is not that events are resolved (happily or tragically), but rather that a state of affairs is revealed. Thus a strong sense of temporal order is more significant in resolved than in revealed plot. Development in the first instance is unraveling; in the second, a displaying. Revelatory plots tend to be strongly character-oriented, concerned with the infinite detailing of existents, as events are reduced to a relatively minor, illustrative role.” (Chatman 1992:112)

Sweeney explains the importance of schema in Malay narratives. Schematic composition is the key to the creative process. “*the writer and teller of traditional Malay literature relied upon schemata at every level of composition, from building his plot to choosing the actual words used*” (Sweeney 1980:39). He then gives the *Wayang Kulit* as a particularly complex example of schematic composition for we find a fusion of drama, music, singing, carving, painting, dance (of puppets) etc. The *dalang* is responsible for the creation of these elements and his key is the schema. He then illustrates the process of schematic composition in Malay *Wayang* in which a *dalang* is able to create a tale “from scratch” by the help of his schema.

The schema serves several functions. It provides basic plots which are similar for his stories (such as abduction, search, battle and reunion) and helps him to assemble the characters of the stories. Sweeney identifies nine clearly defined characters: individual personalities and stereotyped patterns used in the stories. The schema also helps him to build his scenes and to balance the mixture of elements. Generally he observes that the *dalang* employs repetitions in content and form because the nature of audience conditions and the performer needs some “elbow room” to marshall the threads of his tale, for his flow of speech must never be broken.

“*They are necessary not only to the dalang in presenting his story, but also to the audience in understanding it. The nature of audience conditions and the composition of that audience (all age groups are included) make it imperative that the dalang does not depart from the pattern which the audience has come to expect or, in other words, which conforms to their mental set*” (Sweeney 1980a:62).

Schematic Composition in Written Narrative

Early studies of Malay literature have often commented upon similarities of plot structure. Winstedt (1923:29) spoke of the “outline” of “*all Malay romance*,” and later (1958:63) remarked that Malay authors showed a “*fondness for employment of second-hand plots*.” The similarities between various Panji tales has been observed by Rassers who drew attention to the appearance of “*always the same theme*” occurring in “*infinite variation*” and “*combined with all kinds of extraneous material*” (Rassers 1922:317).

Sweeney also observes schematic composition in written narratives and gives several examples of this:

- a. The dramatis personae of the literary romance are clearly defined types, whose appearance and behaviour conform to prescribed patterns. The descriptions of features of the main characters are given in detailed formulas.
- b. The conventional ways of relating events and the stock situations of classical literature which result from the use of patterns of ideas or ‘themes’. For examples, the recipe for wedding; birth of hero; feast etc.
- c. The presence of formulaic constructions in the form of extensive use of parallelisms.

- d. Other formulas such as the items of vocabulary ranging from phrases to long descriptions. For examples, descriptions of an angry face, the period prior to the death of important characters, the scene before a major character embarks upon a momentous action, and also beautiful princes.

According to Sweeney, as in the *wayang*, schemata were necessary not only for the composer in building his tale, but also for the audience in comprehending it, so that it was important for the writer to adhere to patterns conforming with his listener's levels of expectation.

Generally, the author and teller compose according to the schematic patterns of tradition and do not consider themselves as the owner of the schema. Sweeney regards this as an explanation for the anonymity of authorship so often noted in traditional Malay literature and as a clarification for the vague concept of joint authorship (Sweeney 1980a:68).

The Principle of Variation Within Identity

This schematic composition is also observed and reinforced by Koster in his attempt to enter into a dialogue with Malay narrative texts. He writes that Malay stories, whether in prose (*hikayat*) or in verse (*syair*) are constructed by means of an ever-varied repetition of fixed formulaic schemes, which Koster describes as "variation within identity". The art of Malay storytelling is one such form of variation within identity. This principle of variety within identity is not confined to one story (intratextually), but is also carried on between that story and other stories (intertextually). The words, phrases, sentences, and passages of a story

can be in identical or varied ways in other variants of the story, in thematically or generically similar stories, or in traditional stories in general. These features are characteristics of oral-aural narratives (Koster 1993:52).

He also demonstrates the use of formulaic devices and the principle of variation within identity in a story in the verse-form *syair*, the *Syair Ken Tambuhan* (Poem of Lady-in-Waiting Tambuhan). The explicit repetition of lexical, syntactical and semantic patterns which become the constructional nature of the *Syair* was discerned by Koster. To read Malay narratives with understanding and pleasure or to get access to an aesthetic experience of Malay narrative, one needs first to learn to read the formulaic devices. “ *Only by mastering its codes can the reader create a setting in which a jewel like the Syair Ken Tambuhan will acquire its glow and lustre.*” (Koster 1993:75).

Symmetrical and harmonically Ordered Composition

Another element of schematic composition in Malay narrative is symmetrical and harmonically ordered composition. This symmetrical pattern was observed early by Skinner (1963) in his study of *Syair Perang Mengkasar* by Encik Amin. Its introductory part (doxology) consists of three parts: a religious introduction of 12 stanzas (4 of them devoted to the praise of Allah, 4 to praise of the Prophet and the remaining 4 stanzas to the praise of the Prophet's companions); a secular dedication to the Sultan of 12 stanzas, and the writer's apologies of another 4 stanzas. Thus the formula of the introduction observed by Skinner is $(4+4+4) + 3 \times 4 + 4 = 28$. Then he notes that the number 28 symbolizes the number of the lunar cycle and may retain some talismanic value (1963:42-43).

Brakel (1975) who has made a penetrating analysis of *Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyyah* (The Tale of Muhammad Hanafiyyah) has also observed the role of symmetry and of numeric correlation in its composition. Brakel states that the *Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyyah* is “a well-structured and well-balanced text, in spite of its, on first glance, rather chaotic appearance. There is a harmonious parallel in the structure: separation - reunion - separation- reunion - separation, which is based, quite logically, on connectives occurring within the text itself (letters, dreams). Moreover the text seems to go two full cycles: the brothers who have reunited to face a crisis break up when cosmological harmony is reestablished.” (Brakel 1975:68).

He also recognizes the importance of numbers within the hikayat: “the numerical element is not without significance. In chapter 23 the numbers 7 and 70 seem to be closely connected with Hussain. When Hussain was 7 years old he was able to kill an elephant of 7 cubits high; 70 times Ubaidullah pretends to have received a letter from him, 70 times he himself receives a letter from Ubaidullah. He is abandoned by all but 70 men, etc.” (Brakel 1975:70).

Braginsky gives further clarification to the significance of numerical elements in Malay narrative. He sees numeric symbolism as the compositional basis of a work of art and its correlation to Sufi symbolism. He also observes similar symmetrical and harmonious patterns in several other works, such as *Hikayat Inderapura* (Braginsky 1988,1993) and the rencong version of *Syair Perahu 1* or the “ Poem of the Boat 1”, *Taju’l Salatin* (Braginsky 1988), the *Hikayat Raja Pasai* and *Syair Bidasari* (Braginsky 1994).

He describes the compositional structure of the *Hikayat Inderaputera* as follows:

"chapters 1-3, and 14 (the length of chapters 1-3 is very close to that of chapter 14) form the frame, while the 10 principal chapters telling the story of the hero's travellings outside his native country, are symmetrically divided into two groups of five chapters each. In the first five chapters (4-8), the hero finds allies, whereas in the latter five chapters (9-13) the conflict of this chapter is solved with the help of those allies (their advent) is described in terms of picturesque parades). The feeling of symmetry in the hikayat is enhanced due to the rather correct rhythm of alternation of love and battle scene." (Braginsky 1988:276).

He notes that this symmetrical and harmonically ordered composition are the compositional principles characteristic of the Muslim tradition as a whole, as well as of a number of Malay writings in particular, which form the basis of the aesthetic theory and literary practice of Arabo-Moslem culture (Braginsky 1988:275). The two principles which determine the Islamic aesthetics are the decorativeness or ornamentality of style, and a compositional structure based on chains of episodes rather than a logical plot (Braginsky 1993:141).

He states that the *"compositional structure is not unique in Malay classical literature nor in Sufi literature, but, on the contrary, is in full accord with its aesthetic and doctrinal norms. It may be supposed, though, that its architectonics is not due exclusively to desire of 'harmony' or of 'a beautiful proportion of parts' or else to a desire to inculcate Sufi concepts in composition. In our opinion, there was one no less important circumstance that*

determined the compositional structure of the poem: the peculiarity of traditional Moslem education in the Malay world." (Braginsky 1988:278).

However, this symmetrical and harmonically ordered composition is not confined to the synthesized Malay literary works produced after the coming of and influenced by Islam as observed above. In original or indigenous work, such as *pantun*, this element is available too. This is described by Muhammad Haji Salleh as follow:

"The worlds of the pantun too may be seen to be divided into two- one, the external world and the other internal. The world of the foreshadower, made up of images, comes from nature, the visible environment. It is the outside world, external to the human being. Among the favourite images from that world are the birds of all kinds, from sirindit, parakeet to puyuh, quail to murai (magpie). Flowers like sena(angsana) cempaka (frangipanni or gardenia) and anggerik (orchird) give visual beauty to the poem. Being close to the sea the Malays make use of a great deal of sea imagery in the pantun, from islands to rivers, to capes to fishes. These become the stuff of the pembayang. But they also becomes the correlatives, the psychological bridge or shadows of the maksud or meaning of the second part of the poem, the internal human world. The width of this world is large, ranging from loneliness/alienation, to love, to worries, to administrative principles, to values and quarrels. Thus not only human emotions can be found here but also the intellect, the traditions and knowledge....Not only the two parts complementary but in the aesthetics of the pantun they are symmetrical. Each part is usually physically identical with the other. The rhyme scheme is not only aa,bb, but rather ab ab. In the very good pantuns the symmetry of rhyme and syllable count as well as word correspondence are almost perfect. The greater the correspondence the better is the poem.

Another aspect of division and symmetry that must be noted here is the pantun's sense of solution. It seems to provide musically, thematically and also psychologically a sense of completeness. The first two images look as though they are taken from the different corners of nature, often they are joined very remotely by some personal and quint experience of the composer. Taken, as it were, to show off the image-making talent of the poet, disparate but beautiful objects are used. Introduced to these fast changing and varied things one's mind is shaken up by the things one is given that do not initially build up a coherent world, or could at a moment's notice combine to make logical sense. However, the final two lines are of utmost importance in this matter, in settling our mind or associating faculty by joining up the image (through association and rhyme- internal and end rhymes) and finally showing, as it were by the magic of poetry, all things have their places and meanings" (Braginsky 1991b:31-33).

Literary Devices - Wasiat and conventional message

Malay traditional narratives, such as *Sejarah Melayu*, employed a specific technique to convey their message, and the most popular literary device used is the *wasiat*, a will or dying injunction of a king. This technique is utilised several times in the *Hikayat Raja Pasai* to deliver and reinforce the didactic message of proper rulership and importance of loyalty to the king:

"maka Sultan Malikul Saleh pun berwasiat kepada Sayid Semayamuddin dan Sayid Ali Giatuddin, 'Hai Perdana Menteri kedua, baik-baik kamu kedua ini memelihara cucuku kedua ini-insya-Allah taala jangan kamu beri bersalahan ia dua bersaudara serta kedua ajari; hendaklah jangan kamu kedua mengubah setia kamu akan cucuku kedua dan jangan kamu menyembah segala raja-raja yang lain daripada cucuku; hubaya-hubaya

jangan kamu beri teraniaya daripada segala hamba Allah dan jangan kamu mengerjakan segala pekerjaan yang bersalahan dengan hukum Allah.” (Jones 1987:25)

Existents (Characters and items of setting) In Malay Narratives

There is near absence of literary studies on the characters in Malay narrative in general. If there is any serious discussion on this topic, it is only confined to the concept of the hero in Malay society: the Hang Tuah and Hang Jebat debates. Even *Sejarah Melayu*, the narrative text which attracted most attention, has not been given a conclusive analysis.

Johns (1975), remarks that the *Sejarah Melayu* is “ *a work that enjoys a fame, perhaps disproportionate to its merits*” (1975:32). He finds that it “ *does not achieve an integration of character, anecdote and moral judgement*” (1975:35), in fact he sees no literary merit in it:

“*From the point of view of literary history, it shows how far removed the Sejarah Melayu is from the skills and perceptions that can be properly be called literary: there is neither concern for the personality of the individual nor the realities of his life. For the vignettes that stud the Sejarah Melayu, despite their occasional sharpness of focus, are discrete, limited; they are presented visually; one feature of behaviour follows another. But there is not analysis of character, nor awareness of complex motivation, nothing that adds up to personality. In fact the Malacca court yields, if we take the Malay Annals as a guide, is in large measure dressed up tittle-tattle.*” (Johns 1975:35-36).

To Johns, *Sejarah Melayu* is only a document of cultural interest and has no literary value, and its stories or descriptions of characters have no factual basis and are simply of entertainment value (Johns 1975:32-34).

In contrast, Braginsky (1994) gives a different analysis of the text. He finds that the author of *Sejarah Melayu* is not only knowledgeable in historiography but is also a talented man of letters (1994:173). He describes this as follow:

“Satu ciri khas gaya itu ialah hasrat pengarang untuk mengelak penilaian perbuatan watak-watak secara terus terang. Dia berusaha menyatakan fikirannya tentang bermacam-macam kejadian dan orang melalui cerita-cerita terpilih yang ditulis begitu ekspresif sehingga pembacanya seolah-olah melihat gambar. Dalam cerita-ceritanya itu, watak-watak mendedahkan sifat masing-masing menerusi percakapan dan tindakan mereka....”

Setiap cerita tersebut merupakan sebuah miniatur. Watak-wataknya bertindak sedikit dan latar belakang plotnya dilukis dengan beberapa garis saja. Walau bagaimanapun cerita-cerita itu penuh ekspresi kerana setiap kali pengarang menghiasinya dengan tekanan yang sepatutnya berupa sebuah ciri yang menarik ataupun ungkapan tajam yang sepenuhnya menyatakan keperibadian watak tertentu. Maka watak itu seakan-akan “dicap” dengan butir (detail) yang menarik. Oleh itu, hati pembaca lama menyimpan potretnya.”
(Braginsky 1994:173)

“Watak-watak kronik berkenaan, terutamanya watak-watak terpenting jarang tampil dalam sebuah episod atau dalam rangkai cerita yang padat (compact). Biasanya garis hidup mereka seperti terputus-putus dalam sepanjang bahagian teks yang besar. Dengan demikian

“Sejarah Melayu” terdiri dari sejumlah “quantum” penceritaan: riwayat salah satu wataknya tiba-tiba dicelah oleh kisah tentang orang lain dan kemudian pula oleh yang lain lagi. Tetapi sesudah itu disambung untuk hilang semula dan muncul kemudiannya.

Oleh itu, separuh kedua daripada kisah zaman Melaka menyerupai sebuah anyaman rotan yang berwarna-warni. Dalam anyaman itu, batang-batang rotan nampak terputus-putus, tetapi bersilang-seli dengan batang-batang lain membentuk satu corak yang padu. Kalau mahu terus menggunakan kiasan ini, loseng anyaman berkenaan ialah zaman pemerintahan sultan-sultan Melaka yang tertentu; corak yang indah dibentuk daripada rotan ibarat konsep etika pengarang yang dibentangkannya melalui riwayat hidup watak-watak, manakala warna setiap batang rotan bergantung pada keperibadian nasib mereka masing-masing...

*Teknik berkenaan menjadikan kisah tumbangnya Melaka paling menakjubkan. Seperti keruntuhan Pasai, kekalahan Melaka dijelaskan dalam *Sejarah Melayu* sebagai akibat pelanggaran etika pemerintahan: atas perintah Sultan Mahmud Syah bendahara Tun Mutahir dan seisi keluarganya menjalani hukuman mati yang kejam dan tidak adil... Dengan menggunakan cara garis putus-putus (dotted line) dia menganyam cerita-cerita yang menggambarkan bendahara dan sultan sebagai manusia ke dalam anyaman sejarah Melaka. Dia begitu cekap menyusun komposisi sehingga pertentangan dua watak penting menjadi tema yang mendasari dan memperpadukan sebahagian besar kronik itu. Tema itu tercermin dengan pelbagai cara dalam kisah mengenai nasib watak-watak lain dan tetap menuju keputusannya yang tragik; turut mencerminkan cahaya tragisme itu setiap saat dan detik perkembangannya.” (Braginsky 1994:174-176).*

Braginsky points out that the author of *Sejarah Melayu* has efficiently adopted a rather complex but very effective literary device or technique (the dotted line technique) in describing not only the characters but also the general development of the narrative and the compositional structure of the text. On the moral judgement of the text he writes: *“Demikianlah, sesuai dengan konsep perjanjian sosial yang dipegang oleh pengarang ‘Sejarah Melayu’ yang cukup humanis bagi zaman yang kejam itu, dia menunjukkan bagaimana keadilan membawa negeri kepada kesejahteraan, sedangkan tirani sebaliknya membinasakannya. Kemahirannya dalam usaha berkenaan sungguh luar biasa malah kadangkala menakjubkan kerana bernafas moden belaka.”* (Braginsky 1994:180)

Therefore, we have two interesting but contrasting views on similar aspects of the narrative text: Johns, adopting the contemporary Western literary model, regards it as having *“no character analysis”, “loose anecdotal structure”* and *“when not moralizing are playful”*. On the other hand, Braginsky, looking from an internal perspective of Malay poetics, commends it as *“satu ciri khas gaya”, “hasrat pengarang untuk mengelak penilaian perbuatan watak-watak secara terus terang”; “sebuah anyaman rotan yang berwarna warni ...membentuk satu corak yang padu”;* and *“bernafas moden belaka”*.

Conclusions

A complete picture of Malay narrative conventions is yet to be constructed. For the time being, we have no choice, but to depend on the above exploratory studies and their preliminary, and sometimes conflicting, findings to formulate and generalize the key features of the conventions. Based on our discussions above, we may highlight the main features of Malay narrative conventions as follows:

- i. There are two types of Malay literary traditions - the oral and the written.
- ii. Traditional Malay literature, either in the oral or written traditions, covers all aspects of life, represented by *istana* (court), *kampung* (village) and *masjid/surau* (mosque).
- iii. There are two groups of Malay authors. The first group comprises the authors of written works who are drawn from two important pillars of the community: the *bangsawan* (nobility) and the *ulama* (religious scholars). The second group consists of the oral authors or composers, who are normally the *pawang*s (shaman), puppeteers, village chiefs, story tellers and midwives.
- iv. There are two main groups of literary patrons: the *bangsawan* group (royalty, nobility), and the *ulama* group (the religious scholars).
- v. Generally, these narratives are rather didactic in modes of representation as they serve a greater communal than personal function. The main roles and functions of an author, represented either as *dalang* or *dagang* in traditional Malay society, are to serve his community to attain betterment of life in the spheres of beauty, moral benefits and spiritual perfection.

- vi. The writers display specific concepts of authorship which emphasize conglomerate or joint-authorship. They have a flexible concept of the text as it is usually treated as a shared property, and they compose and produce their work and exercise their creativity, within a framework of common schema, and formulaic devices, which allow limited space to explore their individuality and originality.
- vii. We only notice a limited projection of self in the conventions, mainly in the forms of indirect self-reference (*yang empunya cerita, sahibul hikayat*); as authors prefer to efface their full identity and personality, and most of them remain in anonymity. There is an expression of self-awareness but with limited individuality, as seen in the *Kitab* literature; but the writers place more value on self humility, as manifested in the term, *fakir*, a person of a very poor means or someone destitute.
- viii. The authors' notions of beauty are moulded by the Malay cultural and religious ethos, which emphasizes the values of simplicity (*kesederhanaan*), appropriateness (*kesesuaian*), goodness (*keelokan*), and the Supreme Divine Power (*kekayaan Allah*).
- ix. The narratives show a strong orientation towards *istana* as the centre of life and imagination, and place highly a sense of loyalty towards the king. This court centrism and concept of loyalty, together with religion, have been identified as dominant themes of conventional narratives.

- x. Conventional narratives are composed and presented in a specific discourse. The authors compose based on common schema and formulaic devices or construct a varied repetition of fixed formulaic schemes; and use stylized forms of language and presentation. *Wasiat and pantuns*, are common literary devices employed to convey conventional messages. A good conventional narrative is normally a symmetrical and harmonically ordered composition.

These main features are summarized and tabulated in **Table 1**, which illustrates the general picture of Malay narrative conventions, covering both inner and outer forms.

In the following chapters, we shall focus on the analysis of the controversial literary figures and their selected text(s) referred to in chapter one: Hamzah Fansuri, Laudin, Ahmad Rijaluddin, Fakihi Saghir, Abdullah Munsi, Raja Ali Haji and Raja Ahmad, and Salleh Perang. Do their narrative texts represent a breaking away, disintegration and even liberation from the above narrative conventions or trends? Or do they merely preserve and continue the traditions? The next chapters will attempt to address these problems, as part of our search for the nature and characteristics of Malay narrative innovations and continuations.

TABLE 1 : THE MAIN FEATURES OF MALAY NARRATIVE CONVENTIONS

<u>Types of conventions</u>	<u>Source</u>	<u>Author/Patron</u>	
ORAL	<i>Kampung</i>	<i>story teller, puppetters, pawang (shaman), village chief, and midwives</i>	
WRITTEN	<i>istana</i> <i>masjid</i>	<i>bangsawan</i> (nobility, royalty) <i>ulama</i>	
<u>AUTHORSHIP</u>	<u>SELF</u>	<u>FUNCTIONS</u>	
* conglomerate or joint-authorship	* anonymity	* <i>Dalang/Dagang</i>	
* shared property (schema)	* yang <i>empunya</i> cerita (possessor of the story)	* didactic	
* limited originality	* sahibul hikayat (he who owns the story)	* more communal than personal	
* flexible concept of text	* self-effaced but individuality	* <i>sphere of beauty</i>	
	* self-awareness	* sphere of benefits	
	* self humility (<i>fakir</i>)	* sphere of spiritual perfection	
INNER FORM	INNER FORM	INNER FORM	
<u>TEXT</u>			
<u>Concept of beauty (Indah)</u>	<u>Dominant Themes</u>	<u>Structure/Style/Device</u>	<u>Forms of Presentation</u>
* <i>Kesederhanaan</i> (simplicity)	* feudalism	* stylized language	* sung
* <i>kesesuaian</i> (appropriateness)	* religion (Islam)	* schematic composition	* read
* <i>Kekayaan</i> (God's greatness)	* court centre	* formulaic devices	* narrated
* <i>keelokan</i> (goodness)	* concept of loyalty	* variation within, identity	* individual
	* <i>sahih</i> (truth)	* symmetrical composition	* group
	* <i>patut</i> (proper)	* wasiat	
		* pantun	
INNER FORM	INNER FORM	OUTER FORM	OUTER FORM

PART IV

MALAY NARRATIVE TRADITIONS AND INNOVATIONS
- A STUDY OF SEVEN AUTHORS AND SELECTED WORKS

CHAPTER 4

HAMZAH FANSURI

Introduction

An important figure discussed in Chapter One is Hamzah Fansuri. Hamzah's works have attracted studies by Kraemer (1921), Doorenbos (1933), Al-Attas (1966, 1967, 1968, 1970, 1971), Teeuw (1968, 1989), Brakel (1969, 1979), Drewes and Brakel (1986), Sweeney (1971) and Braginsky (1975, 1988, 1993 and 1994).¹ Al-Attas's studies which are based on Semantic analysis are still the most comprehensive and profound ones on Hamzah's mysticism. On the other hand, Drewes and Brakel, Braginsky and Teeuw have given us significant insights into Hamzah's contribution to Malay literature with their literary analysis of his works.

This chapter attempts to review Hamzah's position in the development of Malay literature from the perspective of literature, authorship, and his notion of self. This analysis is based on an integration of earlier findings by the above scholars and a reading of Hamzah's poems which have been edited by Drewes and Brakel (1986) and his prose works, *Asrarul Arifin* (The Secret of the Gnostics), *Sharabul-Ashiqin* (The Drink of Lovers) and *Al-Muntahi* (The Adept) edited by al-Attas (1970). In contrast to the other authors, we need to take a comprehensive approach and analysis of selected syair and prose works to arrive at a more representative and total view of his concepts of literature, authorship and notion of self.

¹ Abdul Hadi W.M. is currently writing his PhD thesis on Hamzah Fansuri at the Universiti Sains Malaysia, Pulau Pinang. However, I had no access to the thesis to be included in this chapter.

HAMZAH'S MYSTICISM AS REFLECTED IN HIS POEMS

To date, we know very little about Hamzah's life, and there are still different views about his date and place of birth, and about the authorship of some of his poems (See Al-Attas 1968a, 1968b, Voorhoeve 1968, Brakel 1979 and Braginsky 1993,1994).

Al-Attas believes that Hamzah was born in Shahr Nawī or Ayuthia, the old capital of the Kingdom of Siam founded in 1350 (1968:5-6). Hamzah lived and flourished in the period preceeding and during the reign of Sultan 'Ala ul-Din Riayat Syah of Aceh (1588-1604), and he most likely died before 1607 (al-Attas 1970:12). On the other hand, Drewes and Brakel (1986) states that Shahr Nawī is the place where Hamzah found God and not his place of birth. Braginsky (1988), however, notes that Hamzah was still alive during the reign of the Sultan of Iskandar Muda, at least in the year 1620. According to him, Hamzah found God in Shahr Nawī, which was located in Aceh, Sumatra and not in Ayuthia:

"Nampaknya Hamzah mengalami penyatuan dengan Khalik yang lama diingininya sepulangnya dari Kudus, sewaktu dia menetap di perkampungan kecil Syahr-i Naw (ertinya kota baharu) yang terpencil. Tempat tersebut terletak di tengah-tengah hutan rimba kira-kira dalam sehari perjalanan dari ibu negeri Aceh. Menurut Hamzah, di sini dia mendapat wujudnya yang sejati. Di sini dia lahir semula. Oleh itulah dalam puisinya dia kadang-kadang menyebut diri sendiri sebagai anak dua kota (al-Mudunain = al-Madinatain), yakni Barus dan Syahr-i Naw." (Braginsky 1994:224)

Whatever information there is about him is derived from his own limited writings. He was a trader, and during his business travels Hamzah visited Baghdad, the great centre of the Qadiriyyah Order, where Abdul- Qadir was and still is regarded as the patron saint.

There he obtained his *bay'ah* and perhaps his *ijazah* from the Shaykh of Qadiris (Al-Attas 1970:11). Hamzah mentions his sufi master several times:

*Hamzah nin asalnya Fansuri
Mendapat Wujud di tanah shahrnawi
Beroleh khilafat ilmu yang ali
Daripada 'Abd al-Qadir Jilani.
(1986:44)*

Through his master, he gets to know more about his *Mahbud*, Beloved or God:

*Hamzah nin ilmunya zahir
Ustadhnya sayyid 'Abdu 'l-Qadir
Mahbubnya selalu hadir
Dengan dirinya nentiasa satir
(1986:96)*

To him it is a duty for man to search for God:

*Ada kekasih di padang gha'ib
Da'im berlindung di rumah talib
Amarnya datang terlalu ghalib
Mencari dia akan kita wajib.
(1986:102)*

This duty is based on the following popular hadith:

*Sabda rasul Allah: Man 'arafa nafsahu
Bahawasanya mengenal akan Rabbahu
Jika sungguh engkau 'abdahu
Jangan kaucari illa wajhahu.
(1986:46)*

The knowledge of self is identified and reiterated as the path to know God and to enable a person to be included among the friends of God, the *wali*:

*Man 'arafa nafsahu hadits daripada nabi
Fa-qad 'arafa rabbahu pada sekalian peri
Setelah sampai mengenal diri qawi
Mangkanya dapat menjadi wali.*
(1986:56)

He also realizes that it is not easy to gain knowledge of self, for self is just like a shadow and great illusion. Only after we have achieved self control, can we see the Beauty of God (Rupa Jamal) and attain union (*wisal*) with him:

*Dirimu itu seperti zilal
Jangan kaupandang pada waham dan khayal
Jika pandangmu itu pada rupa jamal
Engkaulah daim beroleh wisal.*
(1986:46)

Hamzah belongs to the Wujudiyyah, who truly affirm the Unity of God in the manner of the classical Sufis (Al-Attas 1970:177). This classical sufi order world view, is centred around the conception of being, and the specific perception of the relationship between God and the Universe. This is central to Hamzah's sufi doctrine. Hamzah's interpretation of the relationship is described by al-Attas as follow:

"For Hamzah the 'relationship' between God and the Universe is merely metaphorical. Since God alone is the only Reality, how can there be a relationship? But God is not identical with the Universe. We predicate of Him transcendence (tanzih) and immanence (tasbih) in respect of the predispositions (shu'un) we attribute to His Being. The

Universe is a reflection of the predispositions of His Beings - it is the effects (athar of His Creative activity (Shu'un). " (Al-Attas 1970:67-68).

Hamzah sees life as a fleeting existence which needs to be traded for a more lasting existence in the afterlife . Hence, he regards life in the world as a transitory trade (*dagang*) and man as trader (*anak dagang*) who needs and searches for a more valuable and permanent destination of existence:

*Hidup dalam dunia upama dagang
Datang musim kita kan pulang
La tasta'kiruna sa'atan lagi kan datang
Mencari ma'rifat Allah jangan alang-alang.
(1986:80)*

*Kenali dirimu hai anak dagang
Jadikan markab tempat berulang
kemudi tinggal jangan kaugoyang
Supaya dapat hampir kaupulang.
(1986:112)*

Hence, to understand the true meaning of existence, the wujuddiyah, man needs to know the secret which lies in self knowledge.

*Kata guru yang budiman
Al-insanu sirri, dengarkan firman
Wa-ana sirruhu, terlalu 'iyan
Pada sekalian kita bernama insan.
(1986:80)*

With this self-knowledge, man can get to know his lofty origin (*asalnya manikam*) and is able to return (*kau pulang*) to his ultimate destination of a life and existence, untarnished by the wisdom of the world:

*Hamzah Fansuri di negeri Melayu
Tempatnya kapur di dalam kayu
Asalnya manikam tiadakan layu
Dengan ilmu dunia dimanakan payu
(1986:120)*

Hamzah emphasizes the importance of love (*ashiq*) and intellect (*aqal*) to achieve perfect self knowledge (*ilmu kamil*):

*Akan Adam itu jangan kau-ghafil
Jamal Allah sana sampurna wasil
Jika engkau sampai ashiq dan aqil
Pandangmu sana dengan ilmu kamil.
(1986:90)*

However, Hamzah realizes the limitations of man's rational faculty, intellect (*aqal*) and other senses in seeking for God, and hence reminds his readers not to depend solely on these human faculties in seeking union with God:

*Hapuskan aqal dan rasamu
Lenyapkan badan dan nyawamu
Pejamkan hendak kedua matamu
Sana kaulihat permai rupamu.
(1986:110)*

God is seen as “Bahr”, the Sea or the primeval Ocean, on the surface of which the waves are called into a fleeting existence by the gale of creation (Drewes and Brakel 1986:40). God and man/universe are never separated, just like the Ocean and the waves:

*Tuhan kita mithilnya bahr al-'amiq
Ombaknya penuh pada sekalian 'alam
Laut dan ombak keduanya rafiq
Akhir ke dalamnya Ombaknya ghariq
(1986:52)*

*Jika terkenal dirimu bapai
Engkaulah laut yang tiada berbagai
Ombak dan laut tiada bercerai
Mushahaahmu sana jangan kaulalai.*

*Mutu qabla an tamutu
Pada La ilaha illa Hu
Laut dan ombak sedia satu
Itulah 'arif daim bertemu.
(1986:130)*

This state of union is a perpetual state of annihilation of the universe. This state is referred to in Hamzah as “*lenyap*”, i.e. “*fana*” or “extinction” in which “*everything in the universe perishes and there remains the Face of God. Now man as such is also in a perpetual state of fana- but he does not realize it due to the veil (hijab) of consciousness set up by the carnal self (diri) between it and his true self. The extinction of this consciousness of the carnal self is the fana’ referred to as mystical. Whether metaphysical or mystical fana means ‘to annihilate all that is other than God’ (melenyapkan segala ghayr Allah)*” (Al-Attas 1970:97).

Hamzah describes this phenomenon of being as follows:

Hamzah Fansuri asalnya 'ali
Dengan ma al-hayat tiada iya khali
Seperti ombak nentiasa fani
Haqiqatnya pulang ke laut Hayy al-Baqi
(1986:56)

He describes his state of union with God as follows:

Hamzah Fansuri terlalu karam
Ke dalam laut yang mahadalam
Berhenti angin ombaknya padam
Menjadi sultan pada kedua alam
(1986:84)

Hamzah miskin hina dan karam
Bermain mata dengan Rabb al-alam
Selamanya sangat terlalu dalam
Seperti mayat sudah tertanam
(1986:86)

This union is actually a 'return' to his original pre-existent state of being, symbolically represented by the natural environment in his own place of origin:

Hamzah gharib unggas quddusi
Akan rumahnya Bayt al-Ma'muri
Kursinya sekalian kapuri
Min al-ashjari di negeri Fansuri
(1986:74)

*Hamzah Shahrnawi terlalu hapus
Seperti kayu sekalian hangus
Asalnya laut yang tiada berharus
Menjadi kapur di dalam Barus
(1986:142)*

He also expresses his inner wish for the union to be made known:

*Unggas pingai bukannya balam
Da'im berbunyi siang dan malam
Katakan olehmu hai ahl al-alam
Hamzah Fansuri sudahlah karam
(1986:122)*

His challenging and colourful spiritual journey is painted clearly and symbolically below:

*Hamzah Shahrnawi sungguhpun hina
Tiada iya radi akan Tur Sina
Diamnya daim di laut Cina
Bermain-main dengan gajahmina
(1986:140)*

Still being a true mystic, Hamzah expresses his hopes and prayers for continuous union with his God:

*Tuhan kita itu yang [em]punya alam
Menimbulkan Hamzah yang sudah karam
Ishqinya jangan (hendak) kaupadam
Supaya wasil dengan laut dalam
(1986:116)*

He also urges others to follow his path in seeking union with God:

*Hamzah Fansuri terlalu murah
Mengatakan ma'rifat pada orang mudah
Daripada sekalian maqam disuruh ubah
Supaya wasil tiada dengan susah
(1986:50)*

Though he wants us to follow his footsteps, he reminds us that the process of spiritual journey is not a human, but actually a divine, task:

*Hamzah nin jangan kaucahari
Bangsanya bukan insani
Rupanya sungguhpun fani
Wasilnya daim dengan Haqqani
(1986:136)*

Al-Attas (1970) describes Hamzah as a “spiritual reformer” who exhorts his fellows not to believe merely in the letter, but to have knowledge and understanding also of the spirit, to love God truly, to abandon superstition and to establish reason. Hamzah’s constant appeal is to the use of the intellect, for man is a noble creature and must first know himself in order to know his Creator and his lofty origin, thence to true faith culminating in Divine Love. He combines in his teachings, both the asceticism and fervant ardour of the early sufis and the metaphysics and theosophy that characterize the Sufim of Ibnu’l-Arabi (Al-Attas 1970:25). This teaching is the pivotal theme of Hamzah’s writings.

What concerns us here is the literary appeal of his works. Through his work, Hamzah has not only reformed the spiritual world of the Malays, but also has transformed its concept of literature, authorship and notion of self.

Concept of Authorship

The above discussion of Hamzah's mysticism as reflected in his poetry has shown that he has a clear and distinct perception of himself and his being conveyed and expressed through his writings. Hamzah clearly regards, and effectively demonstrates, that the role as a seeker of Ultimate Love and Beauty (*isyk and al-Jamal*) is to attain a meaningful existence in the present and lifeafter:

*Akan Adam itu jangan kau-ghafil
Jamal Allah sana sampurna wasil
Jika engkau sampai ashiq dan aqil
Pandangmu sana dengan ilmu kamil
(1986:90)*

*Dirimu itu seperti zilal
Jangan kaupandang pada waham dan khayal
Jika pandangmu itu pada rupa jamal
Engkaulah daim beroleh wisal
(1986:46)*

The Beauty of God or '*Jamal Allah*' is the ultimate purpose or objective of writing and the means to achieve it is through '*makrifat*' or knowledge of God or gnosis:

*Jika telah kauturut shariatnya
Mangka kaudapat asal tariqatnya
Ingat-ingat akan hakikatnya
Supaya tahu akan makrifatnya
(1986:46)*

*Shariat akan tirainya
Tariqat akan bidainya
Haqiqat akan ripainya
Makrifat yang wasil akan isainya.
(1986:122)*

FUNCTIONS OF LITERATURE - 'Perkataan Makrifat Allah'

The role and functions of an author or literature are more explicitly manifested in his prose trilogy. In his *Asrarul Arifin*, Hamzah writes:

"Adapun sementara belum bertemu dengan yang sempurna berma'rifat, pandang pada lima belas bayt. Adapun ini empat sechawang pada sebuah bayt. Jika tiada kamu faham pada bayt lima belas bayt ini, lihat pada sharahnya pulang, kerana [pada] sharahnya itu perkataan ma'rifat Allah [ada] dengan nyata dalamnya. Wa'Llahu a'lam".
(1970:234)

From this statement, we may deduce that for Hamzah, the role of an author is to write about '*perkataan ma'rifat Allah*' (discourse on the gnosis of God) and to enable his readers to '*bertemu dengan sempurna berma'rifat*' (to meet one whose gnosis is perfect). Thus, the main objective and purpose of his writing is to provide knowledge and guidance for his audience to know of and understand perfectly the discourse on the gnosis of God to attain a meaningful existence.

THE AUTHOR'S ATTITUDE AND EXPECTATIONS TOWARDS READERS

Hamzah, however, realizes that this is a truly divine task which, though not beyond human reach, demands perfect knowledge and mastery from the author as well as wisdom and perserverance or utmost endeavour from his readers:

"Adapun ma'rifat Allah terlalu mushkil. Jika tiada guru yang sempurna dan murid yang bijaksana, tiada terbicharakan, kerana ma'rifat Allah rahsia Nabi (salla'Llahu alayhi wa sallam!). Tetapi barang kuasa kita yogya kita tuntutan, seperti sabda Rasullullah (sallaLlahu alayhi wa sallam!):

Man talaba shay'an jiddan wajada

yakni: *Barangsiapa menuntut sesuatu padahal*

disungguh-sungguhnya, nischaya diperolehinya'

(1970:297)

Hamzah, therefore, was well aware of the complexity of his subject matter and problems faced by readers in reading and understanding it. He regards writing as a serious affair and not simply as a song (*nyanyi*) for fun and pleasure:

Kata ini tamthil dan pantun

bukannya nyanyi sindirkan bandun(?)

Jika belum mahbub berkata santun

Manakan dapat pagar kaubantun

(1986:104)

Kata ini bukannya nyanyi

Sekadar menggelegakkan sengguk hati

Mendemnya sangat mangka disyairi

Inilah haluan akan sekalaian ashabi

(Doorenbos, J., 1993:34-5)

Braginsky offers the following explanation for this statement:

'agaknya nyanyi dan sindir (puisi-puisi yang menertawakan) merupakan ragam dari puisi folklor dengan berbagai macam susunan rima dalam suatu stanza, yang seringkali

bersifat asmara. Hamzah dan para penyair dari mazhabnya tidak ingin syair-syair mereka dikacaukan dengan nyanyi-nyanyi semacam itu' (Braginsky 1993:70)

Hamzah and his followers wanted to differentiate between their serious works and the mundane love poems or songs of local folklore. In the late 1660s, Hamzah's and Syamsuddin of Pasai's works were condemned as "nyanyian cabul" (immoral poems) and "bidah" (religious deviation), and were burned and their followers were killed. The above verses by Hamzah can be interpreted as their response to the accusations of the orthodox group, and at the same time can be seen to reflect the conflicts between Hamzah and Syamsuddin, and the orthodox group (Braginsky 1993:72)

Besides seriousness and dedication, Hamzah also emphasizes that proper knowledge and guidance are important because without these factors, the search becomes a futile effort (*kerjanya batil*):

Gajahmina terlalu wasil

Dengan laut yang tiada bersahil

Gila mencari seperti jahil

Olehnya itu kerjanya batil

(1986:142)

REASONS TO WRITE IN MALAY

Hamzah also realizes that language was the main barrier for his Malay readers to get access to materials or works on gnosis of God as they were usually written in foreign languages.

His pioneering attempts to write on the subject in Malay was in order to help them overcome this language difficulty:

“Ketahui bahawa faqir da’if Hamzah Fansuri hendak menyatakan jalan kepada Allah Subhanahu wa Ta’ala dan ma’rifat Allah dengan bahasa Jawi dalam kitab ini insha Allah- supaya segala hamba Allah yang tiada tahu akan bahasa Arab dan bahasa Farisi supaya dapat memicharakan dia” (1970:297)

His awareness of the need to write about sufism in the Malay language, indeed is significant, as it enables the subject, the sufism, to be introduced and read by wider readers, the Malay speaking audience, who could not read it in the Arabic or Persian languages. Hence, Hamzah spreads the teaching of sufi doctrine in the Malay world.

Based on a great knowledge of the complexity of the subject, and a deep understanding of his readers’ limitations, Hamzah aims to write a short discourse (*dimukhtasarkan*) and avoids lengthy styles (*tiada dimutawwal*):

“Adapun kitab ini dinamai Sharabul-Ashiqin, yakni: Minuman segala orang yang berahi. Supaya-supaya barangsiapa hendak meminum minuman orang yang berahi[lihatlah] ke dalam kitab ini supaya dapat diperolehnya, kerana perkataan orang yang berahi [ada] dalam kitab ini. [Akan tetapi perkataannya ini] dimukhtasarkan juga, tiada dimutawwal.” (1970:297)

In addition, Hamzah arranges his work systematically to help his readers acquire the knowledge:

"Adapun kitab ini tujuh bab diperbuat Darwish Hamzah Permainan Orang Berahi supaya jangan sukar hamba Allah mencari ilmu, kerana dalam kitab ini ilmu dan amal baik termadhkur." (1970:328)

Even though he makes a conscious effort to simplify his works, Hamzah still cautions his readers not to interpret the sufi words superficially, so as to avoid misunderstanding which is very dangerous to their religious belief:

"Adapun mereka itu sekalian berkata demikian kerana ma'rifat mereka itu sempurna. Jangan kita yang tiada berma'rifat berkata demikian - jangan kita turut-turutan, maka dikufirkan pendita, [yang menghukum demikian] supaya jangan segala yang jahil yang tiada berma'rifat mengatakan demikian, kerana ma'rifat itu terlalu mushkil. Barangsiapa belum sempurna berma'rifat dan berahi seperti mereka itu, jika ia berkata seperti mereka itu kafir hukumnya." (1970:277)

Hamzah urges his readers to properly comprehend (*Fa ifham*) the matter and has emphasized his points strongly in his prose work, *Sharabul -Ashiqin*:

"Jangan kita menurut katanya [kerana kita tiada maglubul hal]. Tetapi jika berahi dan mabok - tiada tertaruh rahsia kita lagi - barang kata dikatakan, tiada berdosa. Fa ifham!" (1970:27)

As an author, Hamzah was aware of the limits of human ability to write fully and perfectly about the subject and the restricted function of writing or literature in searching for the gnosis of God. He believes that writing is only one of the ways to the Path and for

readers to read and learn about such an experience, and thus urges them to seek it also by other means, i.e. through devotional service:

“Adapun perkataan tajalliyat banyak lagi tiada tersuratkan. Sekalian yang sudah dikatakan dalam kitab ini mukhtasar juga. Barang siapa berahi akan Allah, yogya dichari dengan kebaktian pula. Wa’Llahu a’lam bi’l-sawab!” (1970:320)

Nevertheless, Hamzah displays a strong self-confidence in the quality of his works, for he has read widely and shows great scholarly knowledge of his subject; this is proven by his wide quotations and the numerous sources he refers to in order to support his points and by the systematic manner of his writings. Even though his prose works are written in the form of short discourses, Hamzah felt that they are complete pieces of work written in good order (*Tamma bil-khayr*) and without anything amis (*tiada lagi berapa kurangnya*):

*‘Wallahu alam bil-sawab! Tamma’l -kitab.
wa sallahu ala khayri
Khalqihi Muhammad wa alihi
wa sahbihi ajma’in wa’l-hamdu
li Llahi rabb’ l-amin.*

*Bahwa ini kitab Asrarul-Arifin fi bayan Ilmi’l-Suluk wa’l Tawhid. Tamma bil-khayr.
Amin.* (1970:296)²

²

The translation of verses:

‘But God knows best! The book is completed.

And may god praise

His most excellent creation, Muhammad

and his followers

And Companians all!

Praise be to God

The Lord of the Worlds.

This book, The Secret of the Gnostics on the Exposition of the Science of the Path and of Divine Unity, is completed in good order. Amen! (al-Attas 1970:414-5)

Interestingly, despite such confidence and a sense of accomplishment, Hamzah at the same time displays a positive and open attitude towards his readers:

"Shahdan. Tiada lagi berapa kurangnya. Adapun jikalau bertemu dengan kurangnya, digenapi; jika bertemu dengan salahnya, dibenari; jika bertemu dengan penggal pada bahasa atau pada hurufnya lebih kurang, diperbaiki- jangan di'aybkan - kerana manusia terbanyak lupa dan lalai." (1970:234)

He appeals for readers' to read critically, and appeals to their proper understanding of human nature in their evaluation of the author and his writings. Only through such a proper and positive attitude and approach can the true meaning of his works be conveyed and appreciated. This is an author's right which he strongly expresses and claims, a manifestation of a modern consciousness and perception of an author's rights or powers. Hamzah's modern perspective is also shown in his expression of copyright of his work:

"Tiada berapa lagi kurangnya. Tetapi berangsiapa menyamakan dia, yogya disahkan dua-tiga kali supaya [jangan] lebih-kurang huruf-hurugnya [dan kalimatnya. Apabila lebih kurang, binasa ma'nanya]." (1970:328)

Hamzah took pains to caution those who planned to transcribe or make copies of his works, so that its meaning would not be distorted or perish, and to ensure that its accuracy and authenticity were fully protected and preserved. Coming from a long chirographic tradition in which copying acted as the main channel for transmitting teachings and the arts, he had no alternative but to allow others to copy his works. This was a tradition to which he had to conform; but Hamzah was conscious of the weaknesses of such a tradition and the great risks and problems it posed to his works; thus as a practical alternative or solution, he

offers sound words of advice to potential copyists to accept and treat his personal words as the sacred words of truth. By doing so, he has made a proactive move to protect his works and to fight for their proper treatment and appreciation, a move, he argues, motivated more by a regard for the truth of his words and their great significance to his subject matter, rather than for personal interests and his status as the author. Hamzah has chosen religion as his theme, but compared to other works of *Kitab* literature,³ he gives a strong personal dimension and statement on the religious subject.

Notions of Self

Hamzah's use of self-reference in his *syair* is an interesting reflection of his self-perception and self-definition. Drewes and Brakel state that there are two kinds of additions to Hamzah's name in the last strophe of a poem. On the one hand Hamzah gives voice to his rejoicing in having attained union with the Beloved; on the other hand, he brings out his feelings of disappointment and regret roused by the awareness of his frailties and shortcomings. Thus, they observe that the way Hamzah announces himself in the final strophes is bound up with this variation. This is done in three different ways: 15 times as just Hamzah, 15 times as Hamzah Fansuri and twice as Hamzah Shahrnawi. Drewes and Brakel are of the opinion that far from being used indiscriminately, these names are on the whole chosen deliberately, and apart from a few discrepancies, are in tune with the character of the additional information.

Drewes and Brakel make an interesting analysis of Hamzah's styles of self-reference: If he speaks of himself in a deprecatory way, he always calls himself just

³ For discussion on the *Kitab* literature, see Roolvink 1971:1230-1235.

Hamzah, whereas, with a few exceptions, Hamzah Fansuri is found in his joyful utterances. Hamzah is poor, low, a sinner, a layman, he mistakenly retired into the forest for meditation, he was so stupid as to think that God's countenance was veiled, etc. These instances are too numerous to be fortuitous. On the other hand, Hamzah Fansuri takes his origin from the Jewel that will never tanish, he found God in his own house, he is submerged in the unfathomable Ocean, and when the waves subside he will be the Sovereign of both world, etc. Among these joyful utterings the use of Hamzah Shahrnawi is a thing apart. When he styles himself Hamzah Shahrnawi this is in reference to the spiritual breakthrough he experience which proved the determinant factor in his further life and left an indelible mark on his writings. (Drewes and Brakel 1986:4)

On the other hand, in his prose works, Hamzah also used the words '*fakir*', '*daif*' and '*darwish*' (the poor and insignificant) for first person pronouns as conventionally used by traditional Malay authors. However, he had included his own name in the phrases: '*faqir daif Hamzah Fansuri*' (1970:297) and '*Darwish Hamzah*' (1970:328). This addition gives new interpretation to his self-definition; it shows clearly his self awareness and knowledge of the relationship between his ego status and the Self (God) and not self humility in relation to other egos or diri as usually interpreted and used by the traditional Malay authors.

On the whole, Hamzah gives a special focus to the treatment of self (*diri*) in his works. He has two notions or meanings of self:

- i. Firstly, the basic meaning of '*diri*' in Malay, which refers to both the visible being and the human individuality or ego.

- ii. Secondly, '*Diri*' is used in the ontological context and refers to the Self (*Ada*), and this Self is none other than the Divine Individuality. (*Huwiyyah; Ada*), the Divine Consciousness (*Sirr:Rahasia*), the Very Essence Itself (*Dhat*). The Self is also spoken as the Soul (*al-Nafs*), which refers to the Divine Consciousness. The Self is the superior 'part' of human individuality or ego. It is transcendent and permanent principle of which the ego (*diri*) is merely one of its many and different states of manifestation.' (Al-Attas 1970:173).

In his mysticism, he emphasizes the need for an individual to have knowledge of self to attain union with the Self (God) and also '*berkehendak*' (to mean will) of God:

"Man's kehendak is a veil (hijab), since its illusory nature distracts him from higher Selfhood....The true object of man's kehendak is God alone, and in this case the kehendak refers to man as 'noumenon', the Diri or higher Self. For God alone to be the Object of man's kehendak, it is necessary that complete surrender of the lower self (diri) to God (tawakkal:menyerah diri), disentanglement (tajrid:tanggal) from the desires of the lower self, isolation (tafrid:tunggal) in God, and love (ishq:berahi) of God be involved." (Al-Attas 1970:140-1).

From the literary perspective, especially the notion of authorship, the author and his readers are the ego[s] (*diri*) and Self (God) is the Ultimate purpose of their writing and their reading. Hamzah's writing is based on this unity or union of self-Self, self-Self consciousness. It is also ego-centred, as he uses his own experiences and perceptions as the basis for and focus of his writing.

Brakel regards Hamzah as the figure who first broke the spell of anonymity in Classical Malay literature, the first author whose name has come down to us, and the first personality in a literature hitherto replete with unspecified and unknown '*sahib al-hikayat*' and '*orang yang empunya cerita ini*'. He finds that Hamzah's final verses provide us with most of our internal evidence about Hamza the mystic, while affording us tantalizing glimpses of his inner life and experiences. Often they turn a general mystical experience, the usual subject of his poetry, into an intensely personal statement (Brakel 1979:79)

He also explains the *taxallos*, the device by which Hamzah expresses and reveals his personality and individuality. This device, through which the Poet mentions or addresses himself in the concluding stanza of his poem, according to Brakel, was probably borrowed from Persian literature; in which it is mainly applied in the poetical genre known as *ghazal*. The name of this device is *taxallos*, and as the word *taxallos* is of Arabic origin and derives from a root *x-l-s* which has as its basic meaning: "to be free", it may be translated, rather loosely, as the "self-liberation" of the poet. It enables Hamzah to focus the reader's attention on the Beginning and End of mystical experience; the individual meeting the Beloved (Brakel 1979:79-80).

The *taxallos* is not only a most important device of self-revelation, but also a very precious philological tool to enable us to supplement the insights which philological and linguistic investigation and literary criticism may provide as to the genuineness of Hamza's extent oeuvre, with extremely useful external evidence. This quite apart the information it yields about Hamzah the man and Hamzah the mystic (Brakel 1979:81)

HAMZAH'S AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL WRITINGS

Hamzah demonstrates that the spiritual journey is a personal process and writing is the manifestation and expression of his personal searching and life experience. His writings therefore become his autobiography, a statement and documentation of his own life and his whole being.

Hamzah describes his own spiritual journey in seeking union with God:

Hamzah Fansuri sungguhpun da'if
Haqikatnya hampir kepada Dhat al-sharif
Sungguhpun habab rupanya kathif
Wasilnya da'im dengan bahr al-Latif
(1986:54)

He describes his spiritual sailing across the Divine Ocean:

Hamzah Fansuri anak dagang
Melenyapkan dirinya tiada sayang
Jika berenang tiada berbatang
Jika berlabuh tiada pada karang
(1986:46)

In his self-searching process, he discovers his true self. He differentiates between his outer or carnal self and his inner or true self:

Hamzah Sharnawi zahirnya Jawi
Batinnya cahya Ahmad yang safi
Sungguhpun iya terhina jati
Ashiqnya daim akan Dhat al-Bari
(1986:88)

Even though he is Malay, to him that is only part of his external appearance and existence. He knows of his lofty origin, and his true or ideal self:

*Hamzah miskin orang 'uryani
Seperti Ismail jadi qurbani
Bukannya 'Ajam lagi Arabi
Nentysa wasil dengan Yang Baqi.
(1986:110)*

He realizes that he needs a submission of his total self or total being (*zahir and batin*) in order to attain union with God:

*Hamzah uzlat di dalam tubuh
Romanya habis sekalian luruh
Zahir dan batin menjadi suluh
Olehnya itu tiada bermusuh
(1986:114)*

Nevertheless, his spiritual journey was not smooth sailing and Hamzah describes his pains and struggles:

*Rumahnya bertukar-tukar
Jalannya berputar-putar
Manikam di mulut ular
Mendapat dia terlalu sukar
(1986:94)*

*Padangnya penuh bisa dan tawar
Tempatnya mushkil lengkap berpagar
Dengan hambanya terlalu samar
Manakan dapat lekas kaulamar.
(1986:102)*

His, was a long journey to reach his ultimate destiny:

*Hamzah sesat di dalam hutan
Pergi uzlat berbulan-bulan
Akan qiblatnya picik dan jawadan
Itulah lambat mendapat Tuhan
(1986:104)*

Hamzah encountered several obstacles in the process. He describes his ignorance in facing the worldly temptations which obstruct his search:

*Hamzah Fansuri terlalu bebal
Disangkanya dunya nin manisnya kekal
Terlalu ghafil mencari bekal
Tiada shakk esok akan menyesal
(1986:60)*

*Hamzah gila berkawan-kawan
Mencari jawhar akan cahaya badan
Oleh makhluk pergi tertawan
Manakan jadi engkau bangsawan
(1986:126)*

*Hamzah miskin amalnya tawil
Olehnya itu menjadi bakhil
Da'wanya tinggi kerjanya dhalil
Manakan dapat dengan Rabbun jalil
(1986:70)*

He also tells us about his misinterpretation of God:

*Kata ahl al-suluk pada ba'd kitab
Bayna'l-ashiq wa'l-mashuq tiada hijab
Disangka Hamzah muka mahbub beriqab
Lain daripada maqam mencari rikab
(1986:66)*

*Hamzah Fansuri terlalu ghafil
kausangka mahbudmu berha'il
Da'im kaucari jalan yang batil
Dimanakan dapat lekas kauwasil
(1986:98)*

Because of such self weaknesses or limitations, initially he was doubtful that he could ever fulfill his noble wish:

*Hamzah gharib terlalu miskin
Dimanakan sampai kepada Rabb al-alamin
Seperti mi'raj sayyid al-mursalin
Jadi qab qawsyn dengan Tuhan salimin
(1986:64)*

Nevertheless, Hamzah never gave up hope; instead, he continued his search and prayed for God's protection and guidance:

*Ya ilahi ya wujud bi'l-dawam
Ukhrujkan Hamzah daripada pangkat 'awamm
Peliharakan iya daripada kerja yang haram
Supaya dapat ke Dar al-Salam
(1986:80)*

Hamzah asi karam di dalam athim
Minta shafa'at kepada Rabb al-'arsh al-azim
Karena firman Allah dalam Qur'an al-karim
Mengatakan 'Inna 'llaha ghafurun rahim
(1986:76)

Hamzah was also aware that he needed inner strength or power to overcome his inner weaknesses and the challenges in order to become the ruler of his own being/existence:

Hamzah Fansuri anak dagang
Da'im bersuhbat dengan hulubalang
Penuh dan pepak tahu berperang
Barang kerjanya jangan kaularang
(1986:102)

Hamzah Fansuri sampailah kaya
Pada kedua alam menjadi raja
Inilah kata penghulu kita
Isharat ini sedikit pun pada
(1986:132)

Hence, Hamzah made efforts to follow the path and ways of the Prophet, His companions, especially Saidina Ali Abu Talib and, other early popular sufis such as Ba Yazid and Mansur al-hallaj:

Shahid itulah yang bernama wali
Beroleh ma'rifat daripada Muhammad al-Nabi
Ma'rifat itu yogya diketahui
supaya jadi shuja' seperti Ali.
(1986:62)

*Uryan inilah yang dipakai nabi
Dan asadu'llah baginda Ali
Uryan inilah yoyga kau ketahui
Mangkanya dapat tauhid qawi
(1986:64)*

*Riya dan khayal ilmu nafsani
Dimanakan sampai pada ilmu yang ali
Seperti Ba Yazid dan Mansur Baghdadi
Mengatakan Ana 'l-Haqq dan qawl Subhani
(1986:118)*

Hamzah regards Mansur as “*penghulu ashiq*”, or the foremost sufi and finds him a source of great spiritual strength and inspiration, for he regards him as a true model:

*Kata mansur penghulu 'ashiq
Iya juga empunya natiq
Kata di sini siapa la'iq
Mengatakan diri akulah Khaliq
(1986:82)*

*Mansur pun iya lagi iya nazir
lagi iya ombak lagi iya air
lagi iya ikan lagi iya hanyir
Manakan dapat oleh sekalian qasir
(1986:126)*

*Di laut 'ulya yogya berhanyut
Dengan hidup suwari jangan berkalut
Katakan 'Ana'l-Haqq' jangan kautakut
Itulah ombak menjadi laut
(1986:128)*

*Hamzah Fansuri terlalu mamang
Dengan napsu diri lawan berperang
Aqadkan Mansur yang hulubalang
Membuang nyawa tiada iya sayang
(1986:128)*

After a long journey, finally Hamzah found God and attained union with Him in his own house, or own self:

*Hamzah Fansuri di dalam Makkah
Mencari Tuhan di bait al-Ka'bah
Di Barus ke Qudus terlalu payah
Akhirnya dapat di dalam rumah
(1986:108)*

*Hamzah Fansuri sedia zahir
Tersuci pulang pada sayyid 'Abdu 'l-Qadir
Dari sana ke sini ter-ta ir-ta ir
Akhirnya mendapat pada diri zahir
(1986:92)*

This autobiographical element is found not only in his poems but also in his prose work. Al-Attas was the first to observe this element in his poem *Syair Dagang* and he believes that such writing is not uncommon among Sufi poets (Al-Attas 1970:8). Drewes and Brakel find this element in his *taxallos*. Although these personal utterings are not autobiographical in the strict sense of the word, they have the same function as the autobiographical elements of the hortatory ghazal, namely, to intensify the admonition laid down in the poem by giving it a personal touch (Drewes and Brakel 1986:4).

Braginsky also observes that it is the autobiographical element of Hamzah's poetry, especially in the use of taxallos in his concluding verses, which provides a complete autobiography of Hamzah as a sufi poet (Braginsky 1994:227-8). He also notices this element in Hamzah's prose, particularly in the concluding verses of *Asrar al-Ariffin* (Braginsky 1994:292-4).

Brakel (1979) identified the following main themes, which all tend to define the position of Hamzah, the mystic, with respect to his Creator and, Hamzah's notion of self.

- (a) His origin is the Divine Ocean, to which he will return and which enables him to submerge himself into the Divine Presence
- (b) His ideal is to draw as near to the Creator as did the Prophet Muhammad during his mi'raj (ascension)
- (c) There is a contrast between his outward appearance, as a Malay from Barus, and in his inner self, where the Divine sparks scintillate.
- (d) The Divine spark in his inner self enables him to be in continuous contact with the Beloved
- (e) He experiences a tension between his mystical ideals and his sinful practices
- (f) He is locked in a permanent struggle with the self, the main obstacle to mystical realization
- (g) The worldly ties and temptations make him swerve from the mystical path
- (h) It is futile to seek the Divine anywhere but in the self.

(Brakel 1979:81)

Towards his readers and others (*diri*), Hamzah expresses confidence in himself and his works, while at the same time, he shows a sense of understanding and concern in his cautions to them. Towards God, he expresses his insignificance, powerlessness, weakness, guilt, despair, hopes, prayers, sense of struggle, agony and ecstasy in the search for union with Him. We thus have two different images reflected from two different self-Self mirrors, and these images form a complete picture of his own ego or self.

The Self is Ultimate Love and Beauty. His Attributes need to be known and understood, but an author - by virtue of being human - is not able to grasp and express completely the Manifestation of Self and his own spiritual experience. He has to resort to symbolical or metaphorical expressions (*thamsil* and *ibarat*) to explain such abstract concepts and phenomenon inconceivable to normal physical human senses. Hamzah uses a certain system of symbols and imagery to deliver effectively his personal perception of the Self and self experience or his sufi doctrine. Let us look into Hamzah's literary devices to describe and convey his teachings.

LITERARY DEVICES

- Symbolic and Analogical Expressions - 'Ibarat' and 'Mithal'

There are several analogies (*ibarat*, *mathal*) employed by Hamzah to describe the concept of Oneness of Being (*wahdatul- wujud*): the clay and earthenware vessels, the cotton and the cloth, the sun and the reflection (and its light), rain, earth and plants, wine and the cup (glass) and the fathomless ocean and waves.

How good and effective are his analogies? According Al-Attas, of all the analogies employed, that of the fathomless ocean and the waves alone seems the most apt and complete in describing the Sufi conception of Being. It alone conveys not only the sense of transcendence (*tanzih*) and immanence (*tashbih*), but also a synthesis of both. Moreover, of the analogies employed, it is the only one that evokes in the mind a picture that is not static, but dynamic (Al-Attas 1970:160-1).

HAMZAH FANSURI - THE INNOVATOR OF MALAY SYAIR

Hamzah has long been accepted as the inventor and originator of the Malay *syair* (see Teeuw 1966; Voorhoeve 1968; Al-Attas 1968, 1971; Sweeney 1971; and Braginsky 1993). However, there are some differences between some of these scholars as to the sources and nature of influences on his *syair*. Al-Attas states that Hamzah modelled the structure of his verses almost entirely on Arabic-Persian poetry, especially on the poetry of Ibnu'l-Arabi and Iraqi (Al-Attas 1968:58). Brakel regards Hamzah as "an imitator when seen from a general Muslim perspective, but an innovative genius in the field of Indonesian literature" (Brakel 1979:85). Sweeney, on the other hand, views Hamzah's *syair* differently. From his analysis of the various elements which constitute the structure of the Malay *syair*, under the headings of metre, rhyme, sub-division of verse units, and grouping of units, he finds that Hamzah's verses were no mere imitations of Persian *rubai*. Sweeney states that although Hamzah's aim was to write Islamic poetry, his basic materials- as regards verse structure, rhyme and number of lines in a unit - were Malay (Sweeney 1971:52-70). Sweeney's view is further supported by Braginsky, who describes Hamzah as a unique creative genius in producing new, harmonious, synthesized works based on two streams (*arus*) of influences (Malay and Persian) (Braginsky 1993:62).

Braginsky has analysed Hamzah's system of imagery and gives interesting views on the aesthetic achievement and significance of Hamzah's poetry. He finds that Hamzah uses three main symbols for God in his poetry: the Ocean, the Beloved and wine, which are similar to the symbols used in poetry by Iraqi and Persian poets. Nevertheless, he finds a unique treatment of these symbols by Hamzah. Hamzah emphasizes most the image of the ocean, followed by the images of the beloved and wine. On the other hand, the Persian poets give least importance to the image of the ocean. The emphasis on the image of the ocean reflects a special orientation for the Malay poet and gives a personal colour to his poetry (Braginsky 1993:42).

Braginsky also observes Hamzah's own creative ability in the form or structure of his poems as his *syair* are twice as long as the Persian poetic form, *ghazal*. The Persian *ghazal* has 7 bait or stanzas and seldom has more than 10 bait. The length of the rhyming words is also different. Compared to 7 or 9 rhyming words used in *ghazal*, Hamzah's *syair* comprise 14 to 15 rhyming words, which are linked by duplications of syllables (Braginsky 1993:76).

Hamzah's system of imagery and rhyme and the form of his poetry proves his great creative talent and skill in synthesizing two elements of culture and literature, Arab-Persian poetics and local folklore traditions. In complexity and formal beauty and techniques, his poetry is comparable to Arab-Persian poetry (Braginsky 1993:75). Hamzah's poetry is one of the variants of Arab-Persian poetics, at the same time, it is also a realisation of the norms of tradition of local folklore. (Braginsky 1993:74)

Hamzah's originality and poetic genius are acknowledged by Al-Attas who describes him as a unique figure in the entire vista of Malay literature, as none exceed him in poetry, whether in terms of literary output or in terms of intellectual content. (Al-Attas 1968:63).

His creative and innovative skills are also shown in his prose trilogy. Hamzah's prose works are described as the earliest Malay texts on Sufism, expounding for the first time the Sufi doctrines in systematic and definitive expression; and Hamzah's texts remain the best and most lucid texts on the subject. (Al-Attas 1970:183).

The *Sharab al-Asyikin* (The Drink of Lovers) is the earliest book on Sufism in Malay and the earliest complete prose work of Hamzah (Al-Attas 1970:178). All his prose works have different levels of complexity and styles of presentation. *Sharab* has the widest scope on the subject of Sufism, and is written in a concise form for reference by beginners, or an introductory work on the subject.⁴

⁴ Sharab al-Asyikin can be summarised as follows:

- i. Introduction - A Prayer (Praise to God, salute to Prophet Muhammad and his companions)
- ii. Self-introduction and reason for writing in Malay.
- iii. Brief introduction on the title and its objectives.
- iv. Complexity of gnosis and the obligation to attain it.
- v. Religious duty to search for gnosis
- vi. Need for proper guidance in searching for gnosis
- vii. Need to fence ourselves with the fence of Law (Shariat)
 - Chap one - On the exposition of the works of the Law(Shariat)
 - Chap two - On the exposition of the works of the Way(Tariqat)
 - Chap three- On the exposition of the works of the Truth (Hakikat)
 - Chap four - On the exposition of the Gnosis of God Most Exalted (Makrifat)
 - Chap five - On the exposition of the Manifestations of the Pure Essence of God Most Exalted
 - Chap six - On the exposition of the Attributes of God the Glorious and Exalted
 - Chap seven- On an exposition of Love and Gratitude
- viii. Self-introduction as the author and the objectives of writing
- ix. The Author cautions readers to copy his work carefully

In his *Asrarul-Arifin* (The Secret of the Gnostics), the scope has been narrowed to God's Attributes, but it cannot be considered introductory in nature. In *Al-Muntahi*, he focusses on a single idea and deals with it in greater depth, and is suitable for advanced readers in Sufism. (The summary for both these works are given later). However, the trilogy is based on one single doctrine: The teaching of founder of Qadariyah, Syeikh Abd al-Kadir Jilani and the metaphysics of Wahdat al-Wujud of Ibn al-Arabi dan Abd al-Karim al-Jili (Braginsky 1994:228)

What is significant about his prose works, besides his systematic style of thinking and writing observed by Al-Attas, is their literary uniqueness. Braginsky regards Hamzah Fansuri as '*perintis jalan baharu*' (a pioneer of a new avenues) in Malay classical poetry who was also '*meneroka perkembangan prosa klasik ilmiah*' (an explorer of classical academic prose works) (1994:222-3). Hamzah's literary skills are reflected in his prose works. The images commonly employed in his prose are good, imaginative, plastic and expressive (Braginsky 1994:230). These works are not like other serious Malay Sufi works written after him, which are usually boring and tiresome to read. Hamzah's works reflect his talent as an author who achieved excellence in language (Braginsky 1994:229).

A close analysis of the structure of his prose works shows that Hamzah has emphasized and indeed achieved aesthetic unity and integrity in his writings. This is manifested in his *Asrarul-Arifin* which may be considered as a microcosm of the aesthetic unity and integrity of his works.

COMPOSITIONAL STRUCTURE OF HAMZAH'S PROSE WORKS

Aesthetic Unity in *Asrarul-Arifin*

Asrarul Arifin was roughly modelled on Ibnul-Arabi's *Tarjuman al-Ashwaq*, Iraq's *Lamaat* and Jami's *Lawaih* (Al-Attas 1970). Nevertheless, we need to see the summary and structure of his *Asrarul-Arifin* to appreciate its beauty and authenticity:

The text is introduced with a prayer which praises God, Prophet Muhammad and his companions:

*'Praise be to God
Who expands the breasts of the gnostics
With the Keys of His Existence;
And adorns their hearts
With His Secrets,
And illuminates their spirits
With the Knowledge of His Visions;
And purifies their souls
With the Light of His Love'*

*The most excellent of blessings
And the most perfect of salutations be
Upon our lord Muhammad,
Lord of the Basin of Drink and
Of the Lauded Station
And Upon his House
And his Companions all,
Praise be to God
The Lord of the Worlds.*

(1970:354-5)

This prayer actually functions as an abstract which foreshadows the content of the text. Hamzah's introduction is not an ordinary prayer normally recited by conventional authors in their *Mukadimah* but acts as an effective foreshadowing of his text.

This prayer is followed by his call for readers to seek and know God, which at the same time manifests his rationale or main motive behind the text. This is done briefly without affecting the flow of his ideas and main issues discussed.

Then he gives the definition of *bayt* and the need to refer to his commentaries of the bayts to understand his whole syair. This technical clarification is important as it is a totally new genre to his readers; and his explanation of the relationship between the bayts and the commentary, also functions to prepare his readers for the poem to come.

Next, he appeals to his readers' for a proper understanding and careful appraisal of his works, and he welcomes their possible improvements to the text. This device manifests his inner awareness of the need for 'self-protection', and at the same time expresses his social sensitivity and concern. This part can be regarded as the final stage of preparation for his readers. Hamzah wants to ensure that his text is read in proper state of orientation of mind and attitude.

This is followed by poem of 15 *bayts* which describes the seven Attributes of God, how to achieve Union with Him and also on his own experience of union. The poem is a concise and crystalised rendering of his ideas.

Then, Hamzah gives his commentary on the 15 *bayts*. It is a line-by-line commentary. His commentary on the last stanza/*bayt* is uniquely autobiographical, for he describes himself in the following stanza:

Hamzah Fansuri sungguhpun da'if
Haqiqatnya hampir pada Dhat al-Sharif
Sungguh pun habab rupanya kathif
Wasilnya da'im dengan Bahr al-Latif.
(1970:237)

His autobiographical commentary is follows;

Fa'lam - Hamzah Fansuri sungguhpun daif, yakni sungguhpun daif terlalu yakin, bukan bermain sia-sia; sungguhpun lemah pada semesta sekalian kerjanya, misal buat ibadat dan riadah dan uzlah dan qanaah dan tark ad-dunia; dan lemah pada ilmunya dan makrifatnya. Seperti firman Allah Taala, 'Wa ma utitum mina'l-ilmi illa Qalilan' - yakni, "Tiada kuberikan kamu daripada ilmu melainkan sedikit jua." Manakan dapat mengenal Allah dengan sempurna kenal...? Adapun pada suatu makna/Hamzah/daif kerana/ia/tiada berwujud. Apabila tiada berwujud,/maka/tiada bersifat, tiada berafal. Daif hukumnya.

Fa'lam - Hakikatnya hampir dengan zat al-Syarif. Yakni sungguhpun/ia/daif, hakikatnya tiada bercerai dengan zat Yang Maha Mulia, kerana zat itulah/yang/ empunya harakat dan sukanat, qu'ud dan qiyam, tidur dan jaga, berhenti dan berjalan. Ia jua yang menggerak dia, maka dapat bergerak. Jika tiada ia menggerak dia, tiada dapat Hamzah bergerak, kerana Hamzah seperti bayang-bayang jua. Jika tiada Yang Empunya bayang-bayang menggerak dia, dimana dapat Hamzah bergerak? Adapun suatu tamsil lagi

misal/buah/catur. Asalnya kayu sepohon jua. Maka dilarik berbagai-bagai; namanya 'raja' dan 'menteri' dan 'gajah' dan 'kuda' dan 'tir' dan 'bidak' -namanya ada, hakikatnya tiada. Tetapi/ia/hampir kepada kepada orang/yang/menarik dia dan bermain/dengan/dia, kerana tangan orang itu daim lekat pada /buah/catur itu, kerana/buah/ catur itu tiada bergerak melainkan gerak yang empunya/buah/catur jua...

Fa'lam- Sungguhpun habab rupanya kathif. Yakni habab/ itu iaitu / buih; rupanya keras / tetapi/ kerana asalnya air hukumnya lembut jua. Apabila timbul, menjadi keras hukumnya kerana pada ibarat /buih/lain daripada air -yakni air latif, buih kathif. Adapun kepada hakikat /buih/ tiada lain daripada air, Kerana itu maka dikatakan buih kathif: sebab ia berupa dan bernama lain daripada air. Tetapi pada hakikat tiada ia berupa dan bernama lain daripada air. Adapun kudratnya dan iradatya dan pendengarnya dan penglihatannya dan budinya/ dan makrifatnya yang kita lihat daripadanya/ sebenarnya/ tiada daripadanya,/akan tetapi/ daripada air jua...

Fa'lam - Wasilnya daim dengan Bahr al-Latif. Yakni latif/ itu iaitu/ lemah; sentiasa buih wasil dengan air, kerana air lembut buih keras. Apabila buih pecah, kembali kepada air. Sebab ini maka dikatakan buih wasil dengan air." (Al-Attas 1970:292-296 / 411-414)

Hamzah ends his prose work with another prayer which reinforces his earlier prayer in the introduction. Hence, there is a unity and harmony between his introduction and conclusion.

In general, the *Asrarul-Arifin* is written in a lucid, neat and orderly style. There is continuity and unity in the content, as well as in his style of writing, which results from careful thinking and creative composition.

In the text, we observe a combination of prose and poetry. Why did Hamzah need to insert poetry in his prose work? Why did he need to include a commentary for his poetry? Why did Hamzah integrate the two genres to express his sufi doctrine?

This is where Hamzah the artist and Hamzah the sufi are simultaneously at work! In his *Asrarul-Arifin*, the poetry conveys his sufi teachings in a the most crystalised and artistic form. Both forms complement each other, and Hamzah in his *Asrarul-Arifin* combines these aspects effectively to achieve aesthetic integrity and harmony, both in form as well as in spirit. Interestingly, through his integrity and unity, he has produced a mixed genre in Malay literature. Thus, Hamzah has not only introduced the genre of syair to Malay literature, but by integrating poetry (syair) and its commentary in a single prose work with a sufi theme, he has produced a synthesized literary genre in the field, which is much more harmonious and artistic compared to some other attempts to combine the genres of prose and poetry in certain *hikayats*, such as the *Hikayat Raja Pasai*, *Sejarah Melayu* and *Misa Melayu*, even though these works are of different genres.

INTEGRITY AND COHESIVE WRITING

Hamzah's works all focus on one central theme, and he has untiringly devoted both his poetry or his prose, to tackle this issue. There is hardly any conflict of ideas in his extent and identifiable works. Even in more controversial and less mystical and metaphysical, or

'mundane', poems such as the *Bahr al-Nisa* (the Sea of Women), the conceptual system, and individual key words or mystical terminologies in Malay and Arabic that make up the poem tally exactly with the system and terminologies evident in the writings of Hamzah Fansuri (Al-Attas 1971:29).

AESTHETIC UNIVERSALITY

His other prose work, *Al-Muntahi* (The Adept) offers another interesting literary insight. Among his trilogy, this book is considered an advanced work meant for the adept and most probably one of Hamzah's last literary efforts (Al-Attas 1970).

The text begins with a prayer and is followed by the author's appeal to his readers, the seekers, to heed the Prophet's saying: *He who knows his self knows his Lord*. Then, Hamzah explains and elaborates on the hadith, and his basic thesis is that the Self of the Hidden Treasure is [none other than] his self. What are is interesting about this prose work is his numerous quotations from sufis and other Islamic thinkers in support of his argument. Besides God's words and hadiths, he includes the words or thoughts of: Saidinina Ali, Mansur Hallaj, Ba Yazid, Shaykh Junayd Baghdadi; Sayyid Nasimi, Mas'udi (515/1121 or 525/1131), Mawlana of Rum (672/1273), Shaykh Ali Abu'l-Wafa, Syakh Aynul-Qudat, Shaykh Muyil-Din Arabi, Mawlana Abdul-Rahman Jami (898/1492), Shah Ni'matullah of Kirman (834/1431), Imam Muhammad Ghazzali (505/1111), Abu Bakar Shibli, Shaykh Sa'dul-Din Mahmud Shabistari (720/1320), Shaykh Attar, Shah Ali Barizi, Uways al-Qarani, Shaykh Abdul Kadir al-Jaylani the founder of Qadariyyah Order and; also the expressions of the people of Pasai. Hamzah also mentions a few well-known sufi

works such as *The Gulshan-i-Raz* by Shabistari, *Kimita-i-Sa'adat*, *the Lam'at* and *Masha'ikh*.

All these names and references provide a strong indication of his sphere of sufi doctrine and his wide reading on the subject. Besides Abdul Qadir, Hamzah was very influenced by Muhyil-Din ibnu'l Arabi and Abdul Karim Jili (Al-Attas 1970:14). What concerns us here is how this reference reflects his international or universal outlook and perspective. As an author, Hamzah was been able not only to draw upon his wide net of sources, but most significantly, was able to integrate these ideas to support his own interpretation and unique treatment of the subject, and he is not confined to a local or parochial outlook with limited application within a specific temporal and cultural boundaries. On the other hand, neither does Hamzah ignore local sources, as he also refers to Pasai expressions to support his points, which at the same time gives local colour to his work. *Al-Muntahi* proves his academic as well as his universal orientation as a leading Malay sufi author, who was in the frontline of knowledge and literary innovation (which later found a glimpse of its spirit in *Tuhfat al-Nafis*).

Conclusion

Through his works, Hamzah explores and exposes the Ultimate meaning of life and beauty. To him, God is the Ultimate Existence and Beauty. To him, the noble task and purpose of an author and literature is to explore and discover the Hidden Treasure and to devote his personal experience and creativity to Him. Hamzah has shown that there need be no demarcation or dualism between an author's life and his own writings. Sufism is a way of life and not just a philosophy. Hamzah, being a true sufi author, has shown that his writing

is not just a slice or a glimpse of his being, but is actually his whole life. His writing and life are not separate entities, they do not exist in symbiosis, but they are one! The value of his work and life depend on the results of the search, culminating in the meeting with his Ultimate Creator, the Ultimate Love and Beauty, and the effective guidance he is able to provide to others seeking His Path.

This is a remarkable statement compared to general concepts of life, literature and authorship of Malay literature expressed in Malay society and literature before him. As far as we know, before Hamzah, writing was perceived as an instrument more for serving others and was not for the true self or Self. With Hamzah, this literary function changes, because he emphasizes that we can truly serve self(ego) and also others through union with Self (God). Through the distinct features of his creative works, particularly with his emphasis on the sufi themes and the introduction of a discernible autobiographical element, Hamzah has introduced a new dimension of understanding of life and beauty. His works display aesthetic unity, cohesiveness, integrity and universality, and constitute a significant change and development in Malay literature. Thus, Hamzah, with his personal experience and self as the focus of his writing, has indeed changed the concept of literature, authorship and notion of self, but more importantly, he has given expression to the change of perception of life within the Malay world.

CHAPTER 5

HIKAYAT NAKHODA MUDA

Introduction

One of the earliest “non-conventional” texts which has attracted European scholars of Malay and Indonesia since the 19th century is the **Hikayat Nakhoda Muda** (HNM). Since Marsden’s pioneering work on it in 1830, HNM has been translated into French and Dutch and has been studied for various reasons, especially anthropological.¹ However, no proper literary analysis of the *hikayat* has been attempted so far, especially with regard to its position and contribution to Malay literary traditions and innovations have remained undiscovered. Thus, this analysis is now the main concern of this chapter.

The manuscript of HNM in the Marsden Collection (SOAS, MS 40323) was sent to England in 1791 and was translated into English and published by Marsden in 1830. Marsden, the first great British scholar of Malay, was stationed in Bengkulu from 1771-1779 (Gallop 1991:34). The manuscript was written by Lauddin, the son of Nakhoda Muda

¹ Several articles related to HNM have been published in *The Asiatic Journal*, New Series vol.III (1830); the *Nouvean Journal Asiatique* vol. XII (1933); and the *Tijdschrift voor Neerlands Indie*, 4de jaargang, 2e deel, entitled “Deuittroeiming der Orang Aboeng in de Lampons op Sumatra” (*The Abolishment of Abung Tribe of Lampong, Sumatera*) which was translated into Dutch based on Marsden’s translation (1842). In 1868, Marre translated Marsden’s work into French. In the twentieth century the **Hikayat** continues to attract further interest. In 1937, Linden wrote a thesis on *De European in de Maleische Literatuur* (*The European in Malay Literature*); Funke wrote a book on the Abung tribe, entitled “Orang Abung, Volkstum Sud-Sumatras im Wandel” in 1958. Drewes wrote an article, “Autobiografieën van Indonesiers (*The Biography by An Indonesian*) in *Bidjdragen van het Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Lande-en Volkenkunde* 107 in 1951; and his complete study on it is published in 1961 (Iskandar, 1965; Drewes 1961)

who is the protagonist of the narrative, at the request of Mr. Butter Hunnings, who had become English Agent or Resident in Lais (near Bengkulu) in 1788:²

"Ini hikayat suatu cerita tatkala nenggeri Semangka akan diduduki kompeni Wolanda dari pada permulaannya datang kepada kesudahannya. Kerana tuan petor Butter Hunnings petor di Lais hendak mendengar kabar itu, itulah sebab disuratkan kabar ini."
(1961:1)

The manuscript gives incomplete information on its date:

"Kalam tersurat pada delapan hari bulan Zul-hijjah. Pada masa itu jurutulis Nakhoda La'udin menyuratkan peruntungannya adik-beradik di dalam Kuala Pali."
(1961:55)

According to Marsden, the manuscript was copied on the eighth day of the twelfth month of 1202 hijrah or in 1788 (Marsden 1830:83). However, he notes that the text had been written much earlier (Marsden 1830:84).

Marsden's view is acceptable but not the basis of his judgement, for he drew his conclusion based on his interpretation of the first stanza of the *pantun berkait* found in the text:

*Bukannya parang baru ditempa
Parang Gudjerat tidak berhulu
Bukan sekarang baru dimintak
Sudah tersurat lagi dahulu*
(1961:55)

² All quotations of the *Hikayat* in this chapter are from Drewes's transcription (1961).

Marsden was unable to understand the meaning of the above stanza and the whole pantuns. He is wrong when he writes that "*the remaining stanzas contain pious reflections and exhortations, mixed, in alternate couplets, with allusions to common objects, for the most part irrelevant to the matter*" (Marsden 1830:84).

The first stanza is a fraction or an integrative part of *pantun berkait* which are the concluding part of the narrative. To find out the exact meaning of this phrase, it must be interpreted in relation to the whole *pantun*:

*Tidak boleh sekendak padi
Sekam belah ditumbuk luluh
Di mana boleh kehendak hati,
Kehendak Allah makanya sungguh.*

*Gurub di Atjeh berkisi-kisi,
kenaikan Sultan Djamalul'alam,
Untung djangan diabisi
Mintak do'a siang dan malam.*

*Kenaikan Sultan Djamalul'alam,
Rotan sampai di atas kota,
Mintak doa'a siang dan malam,
Belaku djuha barang dipinta.*

*Tinggi gedung di Pulau Pinang,
Pantjuran diatas bukit.
Biak-baik tuan bertenggang,
Sengsara bukan sedikit.*

(Drewes 1961:153)

The last two sentences of the stanza refer not to its date of writing, but to the tragedy of Nakhoda Muda and his family, described by the author, not as something only anticipated recently [*'bukan sekarang baru diminta'*], but which was fated and predestined (*'sudah tersurat lagi dahulu'*). Therefore, in the second stanza, he writes that man does not always get what he desires for [*'dimana boleh kehendak hati'*], and he is unable to escape from the reality determined by God [*'kehendak Allah makanya sungguh'*]. Therefore, the whole *pantun* refers to the inability of man to turn away from the power of God, and the need to submit to His Mighty will. It is a manifestation of the author's religious concept of fate and predestination (*'qada dan qadar'*). Marden fails to see the meaning of first stanza in its proper perspective and to appreciate the functions of the following *pantun*; and these mistakes unfortunately, lead him to wrongly relate the phrase to its date of writing. Even though the basis of his judgement is unacceptable, we may still accept his speculation that the text was probably written sometime earlier than the date stated above.

Biographical Writing

HNM is a fascinating account of the mechanics of the pepper trade in the 18th century (Gallop 1991:64). In addition to its historical value, the *hikayat* is very important because of its biographical form and its treatment of the theme of loyalty and the notion of self. The *hikayat* is a biography of a person written by his own son who was also directly involved in some of the historical episodes described. It portrays realistically and dramatically the lives of a person and his family who were tragic victims of personal jealousies and political power struggles. This by itself is already a new step in the generic development of Malay literature, as the text is different from heroic and epic narratives.

But what is the significant difference between HNM and the heroic and epic narratives? HNM is about actual life experiences and true realistic events and not fictional accounts. It is a real biography within a specific historical context. Perhaps closest to it is the traditional genre of hagiography: the narratives about Islamic prophets, saints, and historical figures such as Muhammad Hanafiah and Amir Hamzah. This genre is the earliest form of biography known in Malay literature, written to introduce their exemplary lives and thus to serve religious purposes. HNM too attempts to portray an exemplary figure, but a more realistic account of individual personality and is not like the tales or legends of saintly persons of bygone times composed for edifying purposes.³

In order to appreciate the *hikayat*, let us look at a summary of HNM and its distinct features.

Summary of the Narrative

The *hikayat* chronicles the fortunes of three generations of a Minangkabau family of pepper traders who migrated from Sumatra to Kalimantan and then settled in Lampung, Sumatra in the 18th century. The most eventful period of the narrative falls between the years 1756 and 1766 (Marsden 1830:ii). The story begins with the trading adventures of Nakhoda Mungkuta who sails from Bayang to Java, Pulau Karimata, Banjar and Piabung, Lampung. In Lampung he became the chieftain (Datuk) of the Malays. There, he raises his children, one of whom was Tajan, who received a good education and later became a pepper trader and was known as si Tajan Nakhoda Muda.

³ For details of the tales and legends of the saintly figures, see Roolvink 1971:1234.

After his father's death, Nakhoda Muda married Raden Menteri, who was a daughter of Nakhoda Paduka from Semangka. Two years later, they moved to Semangka, the original village of his wife. Pepper was widely grown in Semangka, and Nakhoda Muda travelled frequently to Banten to trade. He married a second wife at Banten and had nine children with her (three daughters and six sons) and three more children from his mistress (*gundik*).

The Abung tribe, who lived in the hills of Semangka, practised head-hunting as part of their wedding custom, a practice feared by the people of Semangka. Nakhoda Muda led four hundred men to attack the tribe. They used rifles to kill four tribemen and were successful in chasing them out of their ten dusuns into hiding in the jungle. Because of his initiative, bravery and leadership qualities Pangeran Kusumaningrat, the Sultan's minister, requested Nakhoda Muda's services in assisting the Sultan to administer Semangka, particularly to report on any internal conflicts and to supervise the pepper plantations. He tried to turn down the request but his response was not accepted by the Pangeran. Six months later, a representative of the Sultan came to see the plantations. He informed every headman (*perwatin*) of the villages of the new role of Nakhoda Muda. This was accepted by the *perwatin* and Pengeran. The Malay village in Semangka grew in size, and the Malays traded pepper with the help of Nakhoda Muda. The Malays as well as the people of Lampung and Java were fond of him.

There was a rebellion or war between Banten and the mountain people of Banten, led by Ratu Bagus Buang (RBB). RBB was brave and hard-headed. All the small villages had surrendered to him except the people of three settlements. Kia Ria Midjan decided to

switch his allegiance to RBB. He went to him to show his support and RBB asked him to bring along or force the Malays to surrender to him. Kia Ria Midjan went to Pengeran Wai Ratna and revealed his plan. Raden Sapang, a Lampung man, heard this plan and reported it to Nakhoda Muda. Nakhoda Muda and his people decided not to surrender, instead they sent for assistance to the Sultan of Bantan, who later sent them two ships. Kia Ria Midjan found out about the ships and escaped to be with RBB. The captain of the ships looked for Kia Ria Midjan at Pangeran Wai Ratna's settlement but failed. The people of Semangka pledged their loyalty to the Sultan of Bantan. RBB ran away to the mountain to save his life. The ships returned with much pepper and Sultan was pleased to receive them.

In one of Nakhoda Muda's voyages between Bantan and Tjaringin, his *perahu* was storm-bound. He had to sail to Bantan by small sampan to seek assistance. He met Pangeran Kusumaningrat and told him about the incident and requested the loan of a boat to rescue his crew and belongings. The Pangeran told him that the Sultan was willing to help and to give him capital for trading. After some thought, he rejected the offer. A month later, a boat, sent by his wife in Semangka, arrived with the money he needed. He bought a new boat and other necessities and sailed home. After the incident, he did not sail for sometime, and he only sent his boat with a letter of authority for trading.

Nakhoda Muda built a very big house for his children. He bought two *perahus* for his sons, Wasub who was known as Nakhoda Bujung and Wasal who also called Nakhoda Lela. He taught both of them writing and trading and sent his other sons, Bantan and Lauddin abroad, for their education in reading and writing. Nakhoda Muda and his sons went to Bantan to trade. In honour of his services to the Sultan and the Company, the

Sultan conferred upon him a noble title: Kiai Demang Purwasedana. Initially, he tried to reject it but was turned down by the Sultan. He also received a revolver as a gift from Commander Menir Samberek. On returning to his boat, he informed the other traders who had come along with him to Banten about the title. He expressed his wariness about the title and his feeling of hopelessness about the whole event. Later they sailed home to Semangka.

Mr. Norris from Kerui sent a letter and two soldiers to Nakhoda Muda, requesting him to deliver them to Mr. Garden, who was the British agent at Betawi. During that month, Bengkahulu was at war with the French. The people of Kerui (Bengkahulu) sought protection at Semangka which was under Dutch control. After five months at war, the French left Bengkahulu and the British took over the place. The Sultan did not permit any boats to sail to Kerui to trade. However, there were two traders, Nakhoda Setia and Nakhoda Durgam, who wanted to trade at Bengkahulu. Nakhoda Muda tried to stop them, but they insisted on going. This was known to Nakhoda Jamil, who was on his way to the place to spy on the British. He told Si Talib, a peranakan Mengkasar and trusted man of Commander, about the two traders and later both of them reported it to the new Commander. Out of jealousy at the power and wealth of Nakhoda Muda, Si Talib and Nakhoda Jamil purposely distorted the story to tarnish the image of Nakhoda Muda. Nakhoda Muda arrived at Banten with twelve boats full of pepper. He tried to report his trip to the Commander of Bengkahulu, but he was ignored by the Commander. A month later he was called up and fined 200 rials by the Commander. He told the Malay traders about this and they suggested that he should lodge a complaint with Pangeran, but he declined to do so for he did not want to be disloyal to the Company. The traders shared the fine and Nakhoda Muda only paid 50 rials of the total sum. After paying the fine, he sailed

home bringing along four Dutch soldiers and a corporal and his wife. The soldiers were supposed to protect Semangka from the British. Nakhoda Muda built houses for them without receiving any financial assistance from the Company. Three months later, eight more soldiers came to Semangka.

A British ship arrived at Semangka. After some discussion, the Corporal and Kiai agreed to send a sampan to the ship. The captain of the ship, Captain Forrest, requested food supplies from the Corporal. His request was referred to Nakhoda Muda who supplied him the food and this was agreed by Surian. Soon the ship departed and four days after the ship left, Si Talib arrived. He intended to go to Bengkahulu, but was hindered by bad winds. He wanted to give ten koyan of his poor quality rice, which had already been eaten by beetles (*dimakan bubuk*), to Nakhoda Muda. Nakhoda Muda discussed the matter with the other traders, and Nakhoda Sempurna suggested that the rice should be sold first. After two months, Nakhoda Lela, Nakhoda Muda's son, had managed to sell all the rice. Si Talib stayed there for three months and together with Surian Raus schemed to overthrow Nakhoda Muda. They sent a letter to the Commander stating that Nakhoda Muda had unlawfully traded pepper with Captain Forrest, and this would be proven by Si Talib who returned from Semangka. The Commander received the letter and called upon Si Talib who confirmed its contents.

The Dutch Company sent a ship to Semangka to arrest Nakhoda Muda. On arrival, its cannon was fired but the salute was not responded to appropriately by Nakhoda Muda because he had received instructions not to do so from the Surian. The captain of the ship was angry with Nakhoda Muda. He also instructed Nakhoda Muda to build a wooden fort

(*'kota kayu'*) similar to those normally built in Java (*'adat bandar tanah Jawa'*). Nakhoda Muda suggested to him that Pengeran Wai Ratna should be consulted first, as a mark of respect for his higher position, and also as the work could be done faster with involvement of his people.

Nakhoda Muda and his sons, Nakhoda Bujung and SiBantan, accompanied the Captain to Muara Tanda, the boundary between Dutch and British territories. land belonging to the British was taken over by the Captain. After that, they went to the Captain's ship. Surian Raus joined them with Nakhoda Muda's other sons, Nakhoda Lela and Lauddin. Raus instructed Lela and Lauddin to surrender their kris. All of them were arrested in the ship. Nakhoda Muda's house and property were captured by the Captain and the soldiers. Nakhoda Sempurna and Nakhoda Derman, his *saudara* (brothers?) sent food to the ship regularly. Nakhoda Lela decided to retaliate (*mengamuk*) and with the assistance of Sempurna and Derman, who smuggled weapons (*siwar*) to them, they managed to escape and kill all the Dutchmen in the ship and later attacked the soldiers who had occupied their house.

Nakhoda Muda informed his people of his plan to leave Semangka. They decided to join him for fear of ill-treatment by the Dutch and their safety. Kiai sent letters to the Sultan and Commander to inform them of their leaving. Four hundred of them simply departed on foot, leaving their property and all fifty boats. Nakhoda Muda sent a representative to seek permission from Dr.Mr.Blankin, the British agent at the settlement of Kerui. They were allowed to stay there while waiting for a reply from the Council and Commander of Bangkahulu. Lela was given the task of sending letters from Dr.Blankin and his father to

the Commander in Bengkahulu. Finally, they were granted permission to settle on any British land and an assurance of protection from any Dutch attack. Unfortunately, the good news brought by Nakhoda Lela arrived rather late as his father had already passed away. After Nakhoda Muda's tragic death, all his children were separated and experienced a hard life; each of them had to fight for survival and to seek a new fortune by migrating to other islands of Bali and Java.

Main Theme - Between Integrity and Loyalty

The author has chosen the theme of loyalty for his narrative, but has given it a new angle, from the perspective of an individual member of the *rakyat*, who is an independent person, within a feudal setting. The main protagonist of the hikayat is Nakhoda Muda, a pepper trader. The narrative tells the complete story of his life: born into a family where trading and travelling was a tradition, he received a good education and proper training and guidance from his own experienced father. He was not only a good trader, but also a brave and respected leader, well-loved by his own people and other ethnic groups; and his charismatic abilities were recognized by his *Sultan* and the Dutch Company. Nakhoda Muda is portrayed as a loyal and dedicated servant of the Sultan and Company. There are several episodes in the narrative relating his sense of loyalty to them.

In one episode, he attempted to turn down the request of Pangeran Kusumaningrat to assist him in administering Semangka because he might not have been accepted by the other perwatin as he was an outsider (*orang dagang*) to the settlement, but the Pengeran gave the following reply:

"Maka kata Pengeran Kusumaningrat, 'Semuanya orang didalam nenggeri Semangka itu orang berdagang semuanya, melainkan suka Tuan Sultan makanya boleh diam disana. Adapun yang kudrat dan iradat dalam nenggeri Semangka tiada lain daripada Tuan Sultan yang punya dari dahulu sampai sekarang'"

"Serta didengar Nakhoda Muda kata pangeran demikian itu, tiada Nakhoda Muda menjawab lagi serta memohon hendak berlayar pulang ke Semangka..." (1961:10)

A similar sense of caution and reluctance in responding to the request of the Sultan and the Dutch Company is also apparent in the episode where he was awarded a noble title by the *Sultan*:

"Setelah didengar Nakhoda Muda kata Tuan Sultan demikian itu maka Nakhoda Muda menyembah Duli Yang Maha Mulia itu, seraya berkata, 'Ampun Tuanku, janganlah hambamu diberi gelar yang lain, melainkan gelar hamba seperti gelar sama jua yang hamba mintak dibawah Duli halarat tuanku. Akan hal perintah Tuanku patik junjung di atas batu kepala patik.'

Maka sabda Yang Dipertuan, 'Tiada boleh berubah lagi daripada kata hamba, karena sudah tergerak di dalam [hati] hamba', demikian kata Duli Yang Dipertuan."
(1961:24)

Both episodes are interesting and significant because in traditional narratives, royal titles and requests were usually welcomed and received with a sense of honour and pride and would never be questioned at all. The mere utterance of his hesitation to accept it was

already a daring act which would never have been attempted by an ordinary traditional *rakyat* towards his king. Nevertheless, Nakhoda Muda had to accept the title even though he was reluctant to do so. His loyalty to the *Sultan* and Company was expressed in his statement to his fellow traders from Semangka after receiving the title and gifts from them:

"Maka kata kata Kjai Demang Purwasedana, 'Apa boleh buat, kerana raja dengan Kompeni sudah memberi beban kepada hamba. Melainkan hamba serahkan kepada Allah; untung baik dan untung jahat datang daripada Allah, tiada boleh hamba salahi lagi. Sudah adat hamba yang dibawah raja dan kompeni, tiada boleh membawak sekehendak hati sendiri, melainkan kehendak raja dan Kompeni juga berlaku.'" (1961:26)

Nakhoda did not regard the title and gifts as an honour but as a '*beban*' or 'burden' or simply a responsibility. The author, therefore gives an Islamic interpretation of the court, by regarding such titles and roles essentially as heavy duties which need to be carried out with full moral responsibility. His reluctance to accept the title and gifts is an indication of his intention to maintain his distance and independence from the court and royal authority. Being a trader, Nakhoda is able to do so, for basically he is a free individual who can earn a living freely and independently without depending on the *Sultan*. Thus, HNM gives an interpretation of self-independence from both a religious as well as an economic perspective.

Nakhoda's sense of loyalty to the *Sultan* was displayed when he refused to surrender to Ratu Bagus Buang who retaliated against the *Sultan*, and when he was willing to fight against the rebel:

"Maka kata Nakhoda Muda, 'Kalau didalam pikir hati hamba, jikalau belum alah Sultan Bantan dan Jikalau belum habis Kompeni diBetawi, belum hamba hendak menurut kata Ratu Bagus Buang itu. Akan hal Ki Ria Mindjan, jikalau ia datang kemari, kita lawan berperang daripada kita menurut katanya....'" (1961:14)

Nakhoda Muda obeyed the Company's order even though he felt that it was improper and unfavourable to him. He simply paid the fine which was unjustly imposed on him, and ignored the advice of the other traders to lodge a complaint to Pangeran Kusumaningrat on the matter. His response was as follows:

"Tiada gunanya kita membilang bicara itu. Didalam pikir hamba, seperti kita melawan Kompeni. Melainkan hamba bayarlah denda itu. Sebab maka membilangkan kepada segala nakhoda-nakhoda kerana hamba seperti teraniaya sahaja oleh orang besar, karena didalam pikir hamba, tiada salah hamba kepada Kompeni atawa kepada Sultan atawa kepada segala perwatin di dalam tanah Semangka..." (1961:32)

Furthermore, he even built a house for the Dutch soldiers, the Corporal and their wives without receiving any financial assistance from the Company. He even tolerated their cruelty and rudeness to his own people. This clearly proves his strong obedience and loyalty to the Company.

More than anything else, the author portrays Nakhoda Muda as a man of principle and integrity who valued his personal rights above everything. Before he died, Nakhoda Mangkuta advised his son not to borrow or to obtain a loan from anyone, even from a king, and this *wasiat* became his son's guiding principle in life. Here once again, Lauddin has

used a conventional literary device, *wasiat* or dying injunction, but with a new literary message:

"Hai anakku dan buah hatiku, baik-baik. Jikalau sampai hukum Allah kepadaku, [se]lpeninggalku mati jangan anakku membuat hutang. Jikalau tiada modal belayar, kayu dirimba potong, jual buat modal, ikan di laut pancing, dijualkan buat modal belayar. Jangan anakku berani berhutang kepada raja-raja atau kepada kompeni atau pada orang banyak. Itu pesanku, ya anak." (1961:4-5)

His firm attitude to this matter is described in an episode in which he decides not to accept the *Sultan's* offer to help him in buying new *perahu* to replace his sunken boats:

"Setelah baginda sampai ke rumah pangeran itu, maka kata Pangeran Kusumaningrat kepada Nakhoda Muda, demikian katanya, 'Jangan Nakhoda susah hati. Kalau kurang modal Tuan Sultan menolong berapa Nakhoda suka akan pembeli perahu serta dengan muatannya.'

Setelah didengar baginda kata Pangeran itu maka kata baginda, 'Hamba lagi pikir dahulu, Tuan Pangeran.' Setelah sudah baginda pikir seketika maka baginda berkata: 'Terima kasih, Tuan Pangeran Kusumaningrat. Tiada hamba berani mengambil modal raja, kerana anak hamba lagi belum menaruh fikiran yang sempurna dan lagi tiada hamba biasa memegang modal raja. Hamba berdagang selama ini modalkan diri jua barang berapa dapat hamba cari.'" (1961:19)⁴

⁴ The phrase "menaruh fikiran yang sempurna dan lagi tiada hamba biasa" is missed out in Drewes's transcription. (See Drewes, 1961:120)

His strong sense of independence and self-reliance was clearly apparent when he and his followers left Semangka. They left all their properties, boats and even the weapons given to them by the Dutch Commander and simply walked away on foot. The *perahu* was a crucial means of transportation for their trading transactions. His trade with the Sultan and Company, who actually gained most of the profits from trading, can be regarded as his form of service to them. By leaving all his boats and worldly possessions he freed himself of all financial obligations and any possible debts of honour. He was free man since he owed his life only to God and to no one else. His feelings and clear conscience are expressed in his letter to the *Sultan*:

"Adapun didalam pikir hamba tiada hamba berutang kepada Tuan Sultan atawa kepada Kompeni, meski satu kepeng tembaga tiada hamba berhutang. Adapun didalam Semangka ini menumpang ditanah Tuan Sultan dan Kompeni, mencari kehidupan hamba daripada sekepeng dua kepeng tiada hamba membuat yang salah selama-lamanya. Melainkan hamba mintak ampun, tiada lagi hamba menyembah tuan lagi dan tiada hamba mengadap Kompeni Holanda lagi." (1961:49-50)

His decision to oppose the Dutch Company, and his treason (*'durhaka'*) against the Sultan by leaving Semangka for other territories not ruled by the Company, seems a very practical and rational solution for reasons of self defence and personal rights. After having shown so much loyalty and dedication, he was disillusioned with the existing authorities, which had never properly appreciated him. Indeed, Nakhoda Muda had displayed utmost loyalty and tolerance towards his *Sultan*. In fact, when he and his children were arrested, and even after his house and properties were taken over by Dutch soldiers, he still showed

some hope and confidence that the *Sultan* and the Commander would come and rescue them:

“Setelah didengar Kjai Demang kata anakanda itu maka baginda berkata, ‘Jangan anakku susah kepada bicara ini. Jikalau kita dibawak kapitan ini ke Bantan, Sultan Bantan menolong kita; jikalau dibawaknya kita ke Semarang, hidelir Semarang menolong kita.’”
(1961:43)

Nakhoda Muda only agreed to oppose the Dutch and the *Sultan* after much persuasion from his sons. Therefore, in contrast to the conventional concept of loyalty as seen from the above (the ruler), his loyalty is guided by a personal sense of right and integrity. His concept of service to his masters or king is not absolutely blinded by total self denial but is more a careful, rational, act. He believes that it is his duty to serve his *Sultan* and the Company and to be as loyal as possible as long it does not jeopardize his basic principles. His decision to leave with his bare life is a practical solution within the context of his situation. He had to leave the existing system, which posed a threat to his own life and to the safety of his people, in order to get protection from another political power. His tragic death and the suffering of his family and people might be very painful to endure; but the value of individual integrity and human rights against cruelty and injustice is too high to be negotiable.

Lauddin has changed the focus of the notion of loyalty from the “supreme court” of the great kingdom of Melaka to a “small court” of a provincial Minangkabau territory, in which the nature and permanence of rulership depends on the goodwill of his subjects. Lauddin has also shifted the perspective from that of the ruler to that of the subject.

Nakhoda Muda, though he is described as a royal subject, was also a leader of his own Minangkabau traders and people in the country. It is here that his loyalty was never shaken and remained strong, for their interests and safety were always his concerns. Thus, even though Lauddin continues to use loyalty as the central focus of his subject matter in HNM, he gives a rather different treatment to the notion of loyalty with regard to the ruler.

Concept of Authorship

The author wants to project the image of his father as an upright and honest man, who was willing to sacrifice his wealth and comfortable life for the sake of his self-integrity. The author wants to express his feelings of pride in his father's independence and integrity and his family's dignity through their sufferings. By describing the family's suffering after his father's death, he indeed highlights their sense of sacrifice:

"Shahdan selama peninggal ayahanda itu tiada berketahuan segala anak Kyai Demang masing-masing menaruh percintaan daripada sebab meninggalkan negeri Semangka. Segala anakanda yang laki-laki berjalan membawakkan untungnya masing-masing pada tiap-tiap negeri orang. Ada yang tinggal didalam pulau Perca, ada yang lalu di tanah Bali, ada yang pergi ditanah Jawa. Dimana nenggeri yang tiada di dalam perintah Kompeni Holanda disanalah tempat berhenti, laksana burung terbang: dimana ada buah kayu yang masak disanalah tempat berhenti. Shahdan adalah seperti ayam kehilangan ibu; dimana ada orang yang kasih dan sayang, di sanalah tempat beperhambakan diri. Demikian segala anak Kjai Demang selama peninggal baginda mati, supaya tahu segala tuan-tuan barang yang membaca surat ini. Adapun perkataan didalam surat ini: seperti dilihat dengan mata kedua akan peruntungan anak Kjai Demang adik-beradik..." (1961:54-55)

He also reinforces the image of his family's sufferings in the last stanza of his concluding *pantun*:

Tinggi gedung di Pulau Pinang

Panjuran di atas bukit

Baik-baik tuan bertenggang

Sengsara bukan sedikit.

(1961:55)

The narrative is not only author's mechanism of "self-pride" and an attempt to appeal to readers for understanding and support; but it also contains elements of criticism of the ruling groups: the *Sultan* and the Dutch Company. The monopoly of the *Sultan* in the pepper trade is subtly criticised:

"Adapun harga lada didalam Piabung, kalau memberi real dahulu janji setahun, arti setahun enam bulan, boleh enam real sebara. Kalau memberi timbang tunai, boleh dapat tujuh real di dalam sebara. Itu adat di dalam Lampung hinggakan pegangan Sultan Bantan. Kalau selamat sampai dinenggeri Bantan dijual kepada Sultan, lada itu boleh laku dua belas real dalam sebara. Meski berapa banyak lada datang, Sultan juga membelinya. Shahdan Sultan menjual kepada Kompeni Holanda dua puluh real satu bahara. Itu adat didalam nenggeri Bantan selama-lamanya. Jikalau Kompeni membeli sendiri kepada perwatin atau nakhoda-nakhoda, tiada jadi jikalau tiada suka Sultan Bantan. Pasti digantung hukumnya, jikalau barang siapanya yang membuat perbuatan itu, kerana lada itu didalam suka Sultan, maka boleh kompeni Holanda membeli. Itulah adat selama-lamanya, hilang Sultan berganti sultan, didalam nenggeri Bantan." (1961:4)

However, criticism of the cruelty and irresponsible acts of the Dutch Company is expressed more directly or explicitly:

“Maka Kjai Demang pulanglah ke Semangka membawa Hollanda lima orang dengan perempuan satu. Serta sampai di Semangka diperbuatkan rumah. Sekeping tembaga tiada belanja kompeni membuat rumah itu, semuanya belanja Kyai Demang, dan segala Melayu didalam Semangka itu menolong membuat rumah itu serta dengan kampungnya seperti patut. Dan lagi bicaranya koperal itu terlalu keras. Barang apa disuruhnya buat, jikalau lambat, maka sudah pasti dipukulnya. Ada empat orang-orang Melayu dipukul koperal sebab membuat rumah itu lambat sudah.” (1961:32)

“Maka kapitan itu serta dengan surian Raus naik ke rumah. Maka segala isi rumah Kyai Demang itu semuanya diambil oleh Kapitan itu. Shahadan ada empat orang membawak harta Kyai Demang itu lalu ke kichi. Adapun rumah Kyai Demang ditunggunyanya oleh Kapitan itu; siang dan malam kapitan itu dirumah Kyai Demang. Pada sehari2 memotong kerbau sahaja, kerjanya makan minum bersuka-sukaan pada tiap-tiap hari di dalam kampung Kjai Demang itu.” (1961:41-42)

Those criticisms contrast with the more favourable images of the British or English Company. There are no negative references to the British, in fact, the author portrays positively all the British characters: Captain Forrest who showed some appreciation of the kindness of Nakhoda Muda; Dr.Mr.Blankin (British Agent at Kerui); and the Council and Commander of Bangkahulu who provided Nakhoda Muda and his followers with protection or asylum from the Dutch. This difference can be understood as Lauddin wrote this *hikayat* for the British Agent or Resident. Of course, there was a natural tendency for him to please

his patron. As patrons of the author, whose protection his father had sought, the English are afforded an honorable role in the story (Gallop 1991:64).

The author of HNM has a clear personal interest and makes strong moral judgements in writing his work, but these personal motives do not affect its quality as a literary product. It is a clearly expressed narrative with suitable elements of suspense and effective dramatic effects. It is a well-written piece of literature and this is illustrated clearly in its compositional structure. Marsden was the first to recognise the distinctive features of HNM:

“The memoirs, although without any pretension to political or literary importance, are by no means destitute of interest; but their principal merit is that of exhibiting a genuine picture, by a native hand, of Malayan manners and dispositions, more forcibly, and, it may be said, more dramatically represented, than they could be drawn by the pencil of any stranger. They have also the recommendation of affording a specimen of simple narrative; a style of which some writers have thought the Malays incapable, and which is certainly rare in comparison with romantic and extravagant tales so prevalent amongst these and other eastern people. Nor should we be too fastidious on the subject of their humble attempts at biography, when we reflect on the small degree of historical interest that belongs to some of our own most popular works of the same class.” (Marsden 1830:ii-iii).

COMPOSITIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE NARRATIVE

The *hikayat* is not a “simple narrative” as characterised by Marsden (1830). It is a well-balanced and structurally symmetrical composition. The compositional structure of the narrative is summarized as follows:

The Compositional Structure

- I - Origin
- II - bravery and leadership
- III - official recognition
- IV - Consolidation (of loyalty and bravery)
- V - Integrity
- VI - Legitimation (title)/ foreshadowing of fall
- VII - Challenges (to his position)
- VIII - loophole (for his fall)
- IX - Scheme (for the fall)
- X - Manifestation of conflict (internal)
- XI - The physical conflict
- XII - His death (disintegration of family)

The events in the narrative are developed and organised chronologically. It begins with an account of the origin of the protagonist, his birth, education, profession, marriage, family, achievements, fall and finally his death. It is a record of a complete life-cycle, encompassing all his rites of passages, and comprising a total biography. The story of his life is told in a balanced and symmetrical fashion, with equal emphasis on his rise and fall. About six parts or half of its narrative, consisting of 26 pages, focuses on his development; another six comprising 29 pages is on his fall. Thus, just like good and successful traditional heroic and epic narratives, HNM also narrates the experiences and adventures of its protagonist through a harmoniously or symmetrically structured composition.

Conflicts and Denouement

By painting a positive image of the character of his father as a respected and charismatic trader, leader and man of integrity, Lauddin is at the same time defending his father's action against the Sultan and the Dutch Company. He wants to show that Nakhoda Muda was not only innocent but was actually a tragic victim of the personal jealousy of Si Talib and Nakhoda Jamil, and the power struggle between the Dutch and the British. Lauddin has convincingly shown us that the sources of evil and of the destruction of his family are jealousy and slander (*fitnah*), typical human weaknesses which have long been a popular theme in traditional Malay narratives. However, at the end of the story, the two irresponsible and ungrateful antagonists escape any form of moral 'punishment'. A conventional way of solving a conflict or ending a story is by adopting or imposing a common but rather 'simplistic' moral judgement: '**baik dibalas baik, jahat dibalas jahat**', in which the bad characters eventually get their punishment. This is not found in HNM; instead, the protagonist dies tragically, albeit heroically, and his family has to endure a long period of suffering. Hence, HNM gives a slightly different literary denouement to moral conflicts, but a more realistic treatment of the subject.

Notion of Self

HNM provides us with much important information about the author and his work: its title, date and place of writing, the reason and for whom it was written, his family background, his father's biography and even his personal reflections and hopes. These traits of self-awareness or self-consciousness are rarely found in other narratives of the time and before but for religious text or '*kitab*s' (Braginsky 1993).

The author's personal motive for writing the text is clearly apparent in the story and has been discussed earlier. HNM, even though contains issues of communal interest and is of wider political significance, was basically written to serve the author's personal interests: to present the picture of an upright and honest man and to gain understanding for his family's predicaments.

There is no evidence in the text to show that the author ever intended to conceal his identity in a self-effacing manner. On the contrary, Lauddin has made a clear attempt to show his personal and direct involvement in some of the narrated events. He does not confine his role to that of the narrator of the story, but also includes himself as one of the main characters involved and an eye-witness to the historical events, and thus also crucial to the development of the plot:

"Adapun lama Kjai Demang lima beranak itu terkurung sudah sampai enam hari enam malam. Sampai ketujuh malamnya maka mengamuklah Kjai Demang lima beranak itu ada kira2 pukul tiga malam hari. Sebab maka menanti pukul tiga, kerana bulan lagi terang dan angin lagi salah, takut kalau tahu Holanda yang didarat, pesti tiada boleh masuk kampung Kjai Demang. Kalaunya tahu, pesti habis isi rumah Kjai Demang dibunuhnya oleh Holanda itu.

Setelah sampai pukul tiga bulan sudah kelam, angin tepi sudah berembus, maka sedialah Nakhoda Buyung dan Nakhoda Lela dan si Bantan dan Laudin dengan satu seorang siwar. Adapun Kyai Demang lain tempatnya pada malam itu, dimintak kepada kopersal Holanda itu. Tetapi tempat Kjai Demang itu disebelah kurung, tempat itu ada

lapang sedikit dan ada tumbak tergantung di sana diambil oleh Holanda itu. Ada orang Holanda jaga Kjai Demang dua orang pada tempat itu.

Maka kata Nakhoda Lela kepada adinda La'udin, 'Pergi kamu menolong bapak, kita bunuh Holanda yang dua itu.' Maka kata La'udin, 'Baiklah . Hamba coba dahulu pergi kesana dengan baik.' Maka pergilah La'udin pada tempat ayahanda itu. Maka kata Holanda itu, 'Apa kerja kamu datang ini?' Maka kata La'udin, 'Sebab maka hamba datang, hendak melihat hamba punya bapak kalaunya hendak sirih, karena bapak hamba ada sakit sedikit'. Serta didengar oleh Holanda itu kata La'udin iapun diamlah. Setelah sudah berkata-kata itu maka La'udin turun kembali mendapatkan kakanda yang tiga itu, serta mengambil siwar dan mengambil sirih maka ia datang mendapatkan ayahanda. Shahdan Nakhoda Lela lalu kehaluan, Nakhoda Buyung dengan si Bantan ditengah-tengah tempat Holanda yang banyak itu.

Ada setengah jam lamanya Nakhoda Lela dihaluan maka mengamuklah di sana. Shahdan Nakhoda Buyung dengan siBantan mengamuk pulaka, dan La'udin dengan ayahanda membunuh Holanda yang dua itu. Adapun senjata Kjai Demang pistol kompeni itulah yang dipukulkannya pada Holanda yang jaga itu, mati seorang oleh baginda.

Adapun anakanda yang empat bersaudara itu tiada berketahuan lagi melainkan membawak kehendak hati seorang2 memunuh Holanda itu. Adapun Kjai Demang mengambil tumbak yang tergantung itu, semuanya diturunkan baginda. Ada orang tujuh orang Jawa didalam kichi itu bilangan kelasi. Maka Kjai Demang berkata, 'Kalau kamu hendak menolong Holanda, charilah tempat tempat kamu yang baik.' Maka segala orang

tujuh itu naik keatas tiang kecil; tiada ia hendak menolong Holanda melainkan diam sahaja ketujuh orang itu.

Ada kira2 sejam lamanya memunuh Holanda itu maka Kjai Demang memanggil anakanda semuanya. Demikian kata baginda, 'Marilah anakku semuanya, ayahanda hendak melihat muka anakku, dan ambil tumbak ini sebatang seorang'. Shahdan datanglah anakan yang tiga itu mengambil tumbak sebatang seorang. Maka kata Kjai Demang, 'Dimana La'udin?' Maka kata Nakhoda Lela, 'La'udin saya suruh sama ayahanda. Sekarang tiada kami bertemu padanya'. Maka Kjai Demang menangis, disangka sudah mati anakanda itu. Adapun La'udin dihaluan melihat Holanda empat orang bergantung ditali. Itulah yang dilihatnya, karena La'udin itu lagi kecil belum tahu pada akal. Serta didengar ayahanda memanggil, maka ia datanglah pada ayahanda dengan lekasnya."
(1961:46-47)

Thus, we have a glimpse of the author's self-image inserted in the heroic episode in which his father and family bravely fought for their rights and life against the cruel Dutch soldiers. Though short, this episode has a significant impact on readers as it not only presents valuable information on Lauddin's father, but also tells us about his close attachment to the author.

LITERARY DEVICES

Despite its innovative elements, HNM still contains several conventional literary attributes. Close analysis shows that the author has been very selective and is consciously using these conventions to achieve specific objectives. There are traces of a schematic style of

composition in the *hikayat*. First, in the use of a doxology in the early part of the *hikayat* to explain the reason and for whom the work was written; and secondly, the inclusion of a colophon at the end of the story to indicate when and where it was completed. Nevertheless, compared to a traditional doxology, its doxology is more brief and direct in its expression and there is no invocation. This conventional technique is therefore taken as a useful device for providing his audience with important information about the text.

PATRONAGE

Traditionally, the Sultan was the main patron of literature. The conventional Malay narratives are court-centred and served the King's or royal interests. Even though, HNM was commissioned by a non-traditional and non-royal patron: a European official (Gallop, 1991:64), it is still influenced by a similar philosophy of patronage: the author writes to please and serve his patron. As such, it continues the tradition of literary patronage and is not a fully independent creative work. Nevertheless, this has not affected its literary quality for the author is able to fulfill this function subtly and objectively, and at the same time to project his creativity.

HNM is not totally free from the influence of the *istana* circle. Even though the protagonist has shifted from a royal personage to a loyal subject (*rakyat*), the link with the *istana* is unbroken, and in fact, the impact of the *istana* is still strong and significant. Actually, Nakhoda Muda and his family were not ordinary people. He came from a family of traders who were also leaders of their community. A nakhoda was highly respected in traditional Malay society, as he normally led the economic and social activities of his society. Nakhoda Muda and his family dedicatedly served their Sultan's interests in various

fields: economically and even administratively. His role and function became even more influential after receiving the royal title and recognition. He also married a woman of his own social class and thus reinforced his special position in society. Therefore HNM, has continued the literary convention of having a protagonist from a high or special social class who has close links within court circles and whose role and functions are legitimised by the Sultan or ruling powers. The author, however, has “demystified” the royal image with his radical treatment of the concept of loyalty and the value of royal titles, status and requests; and his subtle criticism of the share of the *Sultan* in the profits of pepper trade.

A conventional characteristic, deliberately included as a literary device in the text, is the repetitive description of the scene in the court in the episode where Nakhoda Muda was called upon to receive a royal title. The narrative tempo or speed of the episode is remarkably slow compared to other fast or compact episodes; as many as four pages are utilised to describe the scene, with no concrete developments as similar ideas are conveyed repeatedly:

“Setelah sudah diterima Sultan dengan Kompeni lada itu, shahdan maka Sultan memanggil Pangeran Kusumaningrat. Serta sampai suruhan itu kepada pangeran seraya berkata, demikian katanya, ‘Ya tuanku pangeran, hamba dititah Duli Yang Dipertuan menyuruh tuanku menghadap kedalam istana Duli yang dipertuan’.

Serta didengar pangeran itu kata suruhan demikian itu, maka pangeran itu berjalan lalu masuk kedalam istana Tuan Sultan. Serta sampai pangeran itu kedalam istana maka duduk menghadap seraya menyambah, demikian sembahnya, ‘Ya tuanku, hambamu datang menghadap duli tuanka, barang titah patik junjung diatas batu kepala patik’.

Setelah didengar Tuan Sultan sembah Pangeran Kusumaningrat demikian itu, maka Tuan Sultanpun berkata, demikian katanya. 'Adapun sebab hamba memanggil pangeran, hamba hendak memanggil Nakhoda Muda kedalam istanaku ini, kerana hamba hendak mengasihnya gelar, karena Nakhoda Muda itu sudah banyak [berjasa] keBantan, kepada hamba dan kepada kompeni.'

Setelah didengar Pangeran Kusumaningrat titah Tuan Sultan demikian itu, maka pangeran berkata, 'Apabila hamba datang membawak Nakhoda Muda mengadab Duli tuanku?' Maka kata Tuan Sultan, 'Esok pagi2 bawak Nakhoda Muda itu kepada hamba kedalam istanaku ini'. Setelah sudah berkata maka pangeran itu bermohon pulang kerumahnya.

Setelah pagi2 hari maka pangeran menyuruh satu orang hulubalangnya menjemput Nakhoda Muda itu. Serta sampai hulubalang itu maka ia berkata kepada Nakhoda Muda itu, demikian katanya, 'Hamba datang kepada Nakhoda Muda disuruh Tuan Pangeran Kusumaningrat menyuruh Nakhoda datang kedalam istana baginda itu serta dengan hamba ini.'

Serta didengar Nakhoda Muda kata hulubalang itu, maka baginda berjalanlah sama2 dengan hulubalang itu mengadap Pangeran Kusumaningrat. Serta sampai Nakhoda Muda itu kerumah pangeran itu, maka Nakhoda Muda berkata, demikian katanya, 'Hamba datang menjelang tuan pangeran dari karena datang hulubalang tuan pangeran titahkan menjemput hamba.'

Serta didengar pangeran kata Nakhoda itu, maka pangeran berkata, 'Sebab maka hamba memanggil Nakhoda Muda, karena hamba dititahkan Tuan Sultan membawak Nakhoda Muda mengadab Duli Yang Dipertuan Sultan sama2 hamba pada hari ini.'

Serta sudah berkata-kata maka Nakhoda Muda berjalanlah sama2 dengan Pangeran Kusumaningrat itu kedalam kota Sultan Bantan. Serta sampai diluar pintu kota besi itu maka is berhenti duduk, karena disitulah tempat orang jaga. Adapun orang yang jaga disana sembilan orang pada tiap2 hari memegang senjatanya. Disebelah pintu besi itu satu kapitan Holanda dengan empat puluh orang soldadunya jaga disana.

Setelah dilihatnya Pangeran Kusumaningrat itu datang sama dengan Nakhoda Muda itu, maka kata segala pengawal yang jaga itu serta kapitan Holanda itu, 'Apa sebab maka tuan pangeran membawak Nakhoda kemari ini?' Maka kata pangeran, 'Sebab maka hamba datang sama2 Nakhoda ini karena Tuan Sultan menyuruh hamba membawak Nakhoda Muda ini mengadab Duli Tuan Sultan'.

Setelah didengar segala pengawal yang jaga itu serta dengan kapitan itu kata Pangeran Kusumaningrat demikian itu, maka segala mereka itu terchengang-chengang seraya pikir didalam hatinya: Apa kehendak Tuan Sultan kepada Nakhoda Muda ini, karena beberapa banyak Nakhoda2 yang besar dan yang kaya ditanah Jawa ini datang ke Bantan ini, seorangpun belum hamba melihat atawa mendengar yang dipanggil Tuan Sultan masuk kedalam kota ini. Demikian pikirnya segala pengawal yang jaga itu serta dengan kapitan Holanda itu.

Shahdan maka kata Pangeran Kusumaningrat kepada orang yang jaga itu, 'Pergilah engkau kepada Pekir Adam katakan hamba ada diluar pintu besi sama2 dengan Nakhoda Muda akan mengadab Duli Dang dipertuan.' Setelah didengar mereka itu kata pangeran demikian itu maka ia berjalan mendapatkan Pekir Adam itu mengatakan Pangeran Kusumaningrat sama2 Nakhoda Muda ada diluar pintu besi akan mengadab Duli Yang Dipertuan. Maka kata Pekir Adam itu, 'Suruhlah baginda itu datang kepada tempatku ini.' Maka hulubalang itu pulanglah mendapatkan Pangeran Kusumaningrat serta dengan Nakhoda Muda itu mengatakan Pekir Adam menyuruh pangeran serta Nakhoda Muda datang kepada tempat Pekir Adam itu. Setelah didengar pangeran kata hulubalang itu, maka baginda kedua itu datanglah pada tempat Pekir Adam itu.

Adapun tempat Pekir Adam itu ada empat puluh orang yang pandai bermain dabus chara Arab dan memalu segala bunyi-bunyian dan yang pandai menari chara Jawa. Jikalau Sultan hendak melihat orang bermain-main, datanglah pada tempat Pekir Adam itu. Barang apa permainan yang suka hati Sultan melihat, ada semuanya tempat itu.

Setelah sampai pangeran serta dengan Nakhoda Muda kepada tempat Pekir Adam itu maka kata Pekir Adam, 'Apa sebabnya maka Nakhoda Muda ini datang sama2 tuan Pangeran Kusumaningrat ini?' Setelah didengar baginda kata Pekir Adam demikian itu, maka baginda berkata, 'Tiada hamba tahu, ya Pekir Adam, kehendak hati Tuan Sultan menyuruh hamba membawak Nakhoda Muda ini mengadab Duli Tuan Sultan kepada hari ini.'

Setelah didengar oleh Pekir Adam kata Pengeran Kusumaningrat demikian, maka Pekir Adam terchengang-chengang seraya pikir didalam hatinya: Apa kehendak hati Tuan Sultan kepada Nakhoda Muda ini; tiada terpikir didalam hati Pekir Adam itu. Maka Pengeran Kusumaningrat berkata kepada Pekir Adam itu, demikian katanya, 'Pergilah Pekir Adam mengadab Duli yang dipertuan, katakan hamba ada pada tempatmu ini sama2 Nakhoda Muda akan mengadab Duli Yang Dipertuan'.

Setelah didengar Pekir Adam kata pangeran itu maka ia pergilah mengadab Duli Yang Dipertuan. Setelah sampai Pekir Adam itu pada tempat segala dayang2 biti2 perwara sekalian itu, setelah dilihat oleh dayang2 itu Pekir Adam itu datang, maka berkatalah seorang perempuan tua yang menjaga segala mereka itu, demikian katanya, 'Apa kehendak Pekir Adam datang kemari ini?' Maka kata Pekir Adam itu, 'Ya ibuku, sebab hamba datang kemari ini mengatakan Pangeran Kusumaningrat serta dengan Nakhoda Muda hendak menjelang Duli Yang Dipertuan. Baginda itu ada menanti pada tempat hamba akan menanti titah Yang dipertuan'.

Setelah didengar oleh perempuan tua itu kata Pekir Adam demikian itu maka perempuan tua itu pergilah mengadab Duli yang dipertuan. Serta sampai perempuan tua itu maka ditanya oleh tuan Sultan, 'Apa kehendakmu datang kepadaku?' Maka sembah perempuan tua itu, 'Tuanku, ampun kebawah Duli Yang Mahamulia diatas batu kepala patik. Sebab hambamu datang menjunjung duli mengatakan tuan Pengeran Kusumaningrat dengan Nakhoda Muda ada dirumah Pekir Adam hendak datang menjelang Duli Tuanku.' Setelah didengar tuan Sultan kata perempuan tua itu, maka titah Tuan Sultan, 'Suruh pangeran itu datang kepadaku.'

Maka perempuan tua itu menyembah lalu mendapatkan Pekir Adam itu mengatakan titah Tuan Sultan menyuruh pangeran dengan Nakhoda Muda masuk mengadab kedalam istana. Setelah sampai perempuan tua itu kepada Pekir Adam maka berkata kepada Pekir Adam itu menyuruh Pangeran Kusumaningrat dengan Nakhoda Muda masuk mengadab kedalam istana. Setelah didengar Pekir Adam kata perempuan tua itu, maka ia pergilah mendapatkan Pangeran Kusumaningrat dengan Nakhoda Muda itu mengatakan Duli Yang Dipertuan menyuruh baginda yang kedua itu masuk mengadab kedalam istana Yang Dipertuan. Setelah didengar pangeran kata Pekir Adam itu maka berjalan kedua baginda itu masuk kedalam istana.

Setelah sampai Pangeran Kusumaningrat serta dengan Nakhoda Muda itu seraya menyembah dan menjunjung Duli Yang Dipertuan itu. Maka Pangeran Kusumaningrat dengan Nakhoda Muda duduk mengadab. Maka titah Tuan Sultan kepada Pangeran Kusumaningrat, 'Kepada hari ini aku melekatkan gelar kepada Nakhoda Muda ini Kjai Demang Purwasedana. Katakan olehmu kepada pengawal yang sembilan dan kapitan Belanda yang jaga diluar pintu kotaku ini serta dengan segala hamba rakyatku didalam negeri Bantan ini.' (1961:21-24)

Perhaps the author wanted to show the impact of Nakhoda's presence in the *istana*, and especially the sense of wonder and suspense he created among the people of the court who were anxious to know the reason for his visit. This indirectly reinforces the grandeur of title rendered to Nakhoda Muda and later heightens the ironic impact of the scene where he turns down the title. Actually, the formulaic descriptions are not only due to decorative or stylistic reasons, for Lauddin has shown that he can be concise and brief in description if

he wants to. By maintaining the conventional court style of descriptions for *istana* scenes, he actually conveys the hidden message to his audience that he is very familiar with scenes in the court and its modes of social protocol and decorum; and this proves that Nakhoda Muda is indeed an independent person, who remains unimpressed with the court. This device is carefully and effectively selected to enhance the image of author's father as an independent, upright man.

Another typical didactic technique of conveying literary messages adopted by HNM, is the use of the dying injunction (*wasiat*). In traditional narratives, before he dies, sultan normally gives important advice to his children and ministers. His last monologue on his death bed usually functions as the key exposition of values in the story. HNM does not escape from the use of this moral device. Nakhoda Mangkuta behaved in a similar way to his son, Nakhoda Muda; and his dying injunction not only shaped the protagonist's philosophy of life, but is also one of the key messages of the narrative. This narrative device and other moralising tendencies in the *hikayat*, show that HNM is continuing the traditional didactic functions of Malay literature but within a new literary scene and with a fresh literary message.

The author also uses a conventional poetic form of expression, *pantun berkait*, as the concluding part of his narrative. There are five stanzas of pantun which are effectively used for self-reflections on the whole history of his family, their predicament and his submission to the will of God, his hopes and heartfelt reminders to his readers to heed similar circumstances, all concisely expressed in the *pantuns* as an epilogue to his narrative.

The pantuns not only provide an overall perspective on the subject of the narrative, but also add aesthetic qualities to it.

In addition to the *pantun*, a few metaphoric expressions are found, such as “*seperti tanam-tanaman didatangi hujan*” (1961:51); “*laksana burung terbang:di mana ada buah kayu yang masak di sanalah tempat berhenti*” (1961:55); and “*seperti ayam kehilangan ibu*” (1961:55). These metaphors are used properly to describe certain types of situations in the narrative. Therefore, conventional poetic forms and metaphoric expressions are used discriminately and effectively.

LANGUAGE OF THE NARRATIVE

The language usage of the hikayat has been critized by Teuku Iskandar:

“*Bahasanya sederhana dan bahasa yang dipergunakan sehari-hari, walaupun di sana-sini terdapat pengaruh pengaruh bahasa Minangkabau. Hal ini tidak dapat kita hairankan kerana pengarangnya sendiri dilahirkan dalam keluarga Minangkabau. Dan kadang-kadang gelaran-gelaran yang lazim dipergunakan untuk sultan ditukar dengan panggilan-panggilan yang dipakai untuk orang-orang biasa yang dihormati seperti orang Eropah. Paduka sultan atau yang maha mulia sultan dalam karangan ini hanya disebut tuan sultan sahaja sedangkan Nakhoda Muda disebut baginda. Laudin yang dibesarkan di Semangka, jauh dari istana Bantan, sudah tentu tidak begitu mahir akan bahasa istana.*” (Teuku Iskandar 1965:351).

Perhaps Teuku Iskandar’s general view of Lauddin’s average language competence and the influence of the Minangkabau language is acceptable, as we notice some usually

inappropriate pronouns used for royal terms. For example, he used “*hamba*” as a pronoun for the Sultan:

“*Maka sabda Yang Dipertuan: 'Tiada boleh berubah lagi kata hamba, kerana sudah tergerak didalam [hati] hamba' (1961:24)*

The proper or acceptable term for is actually “*beta*” . He also uses “*Sultan berkata*” (1961:19), instead of “*Sultan bertitah*”. However, Teuku Iskandar’s specific comment on “*Tuan Sultan*” may not necessarily true. We may assume that because of the inappropriate title used, the author is not familiar with of istana terms of reference. On the other hand, we may not rule out the possibility that since Lauddin wrote his *hikayat* for his British patron, it was intentionally done to undermine the *sultan*’s position vis-a-vis the status of the Dutch officer whom he addressed as “*Tuan Komander*”. This is possible considering his clear feelings towards and criticism of the *Sultan* who was responsible for his family’s misfortune.

Conclusions

To date, a few scholars have identified the distinct features of HNM and recognized its importance for the development of Malay literature. On the contribution of the *hikayat* to Malay literature as a realistic narrative, Iskandar concludes:

“*Pengarang telah melepaskan diri dari tradisi kesusasteraan lama Melayu. Dalam hikayat ini pengarang telah mengemukakan kejadian-kejadian yang telah dialami oleh ayahnya dan keluarganya sendiri. Kejadian yang dapat dialami oleh setiap manusia Melayu dalam keadaan yang serupa itu....Dengan hikayat ini jelaslah bahawa setengah abad sebelum Abdullah bin Abdul Kadir Munshi telah ada pengarang Melayu yang menghasilkan*

karya yang merupakan pembaharuan dalam kesusasteraan lama Melayu. Dan lebih-lebih dari karya-karya Abdullah, Hikayat Nakhoda Muda tidak mempunyai pengikutnya dan berdiri tersendiri” (T.Iskandar 1965:351).

Our observations so far have shown that the **Hikayat Nakhoda Muda** is indeed an innovative piece of literature, which has great historical and literary value. Compared to traditional narratives, its significant differences are in its auto-biographical form, its realism, its independent interpretation or treatment of the old concept of loyalty and its self-conscious style of writing and creative deployment of conventional literary devices. The text has not broken totally free from the traditions or conventions of Malay narratives and still contains traditional elements, because the author has purposely selected and creatively employed such useful elements to achieve his own personal aims or for his own purposes, and hence he has given a fresh interpretation and treatment to those conventions.

CHAPTER 6

AHMAD RIJALUDDIN'S HIKAYAT PERINTAH NEGERI BENGKALA

Introduction

In this chapter, we shall discuss another narrative text, *Ahmad Rijaluddin's Hikayat Perintah Negeri Bengkulu* (HPNB), which was studied and brought to our attention by Skinner (1976, 1978 and 1982). All that we know about the text and its author derives from Skinner,¹ and it is therefore necessary to reexamine and reinterpret his findings and observations in the light of our discussion on Malay literary traditions and innovations.

HPNB was written by Ahmad Rijaluddin who was born in about 1770, probably in Kedah; he was the eldest son of 'Hakim' Long Fakir Kandu, one of the more prominent members of the Chulia mercantile community (Tamil Muslims from the Coromandel Coast) in Penang. Ahmad was a translator, interpreter and language teacher to the European mercantile community. He was employed by the Scott Family. His brother Ibrahim, was Raffles' Malay secretary (Skinner 1982:8-10).

Ahmad wrote the text after his voyage to Calcutta in 1810 when he accompanied Robert Scott, the son of Captain Scott. The manuscript was written in Sept/Oct 1811

¹ Skinner edited the text based on the microfilm of the manuscript found in the British Library's Collection of Oriental Manuscripts, catalogued as 'Add 12386', which seems to be the only manuscript as no other manuscript of the text has so far been found (Skinner, 1982:11). The text occupies 97 pages and contains approximately 25,000 words and it seems likely that the scribe was Ahmad himself (Skinner, 1982:11).

All quotations of the text in this chapter are from Skinner's edition (1982).

(Skinner, 1976:204). HPNB is Ahmad's impressions of the visit in the form of a travel-diary or travelogue.

The narrative begins with a brief reference to the voyage to Calcutta, and statement about the date of writing and the name of person whom he accompanied. This opening statement is followed by a panegyric account of the British Empire under the leadership of Lord Minto, the Governor-General. Then he gives a description of the towns and villages he saw and visited as he sailed up the river Hoogly to Calcutta, the city of Calcutta and several other European settlements along the Hoogly north of Calcutta. He also describes briefly the Mahrattas and Raffles (as the Agent to the Governor-General with the Malay States) and gives an account of the British-Indian expedition against the Ile de France (Mauritius). The narrative concludes with an account of the opening stages of the Java campaign and ends at a point in time just before the landing of the expedition on 4 August 1811.

The city is an important literary theme among modern writers as it offers rich material for their writings. The city is the centre of activity: economically, politically and culturally - and authors are usually attracted by the impact of its dynamic and colourful way of life on human life and nature. This narrative is interesting because it is a travelogue which explores life in a big city. Ahmad's narrative is possibly the earliest account of these subjects in Malay literature.

Calcutta was the capital city of the British Empire and its political status as the centre of the colonial administration was a natural attraction to many travellers, especially

those from other British colonies. Therefore, Ahmad's impressions of his visit to Calcutta offer a unique insight into the attitudes of colonialisised people towards their colonial rulers, and the impact of colonial city on their life.

In order to understand Ahmad's perception of life in Calcutta and the position of his writing in Malay literature, we need to look into his concept of authorship and notion of self.

Concept of Authorship

Skinner states that Ahmad wrote the text at the prompting of a European, his British patron (1982:4). We find no clear internal evidence to support the claim. Unlike Abdullah, who explicitly states that he wrote his *Hikayat Abdullah* at the request of his white friend, Ahmad does not provide us with enough information to draw such a conclusion. In his colophon, he only states that his trip to Benggala was to accompany Robert Scott, his employer. Did Robert Scott really prompt him to write the travelogue? We can only postulate, but cannot confirm, this premise.

Nevertheless, close analysis of the text does show that Ahmad did aim to glorify the British in his writings.

Compositional Structure - Journey Through the River of British Power'

His perception or motive is clearly illustrated in the compositional structure of the narrative. Structurally, the text consists of seven major parts:

I. Introduction (the colophon)

- II. The departure from Malay world and foreshadowing of power
- III. The Exposition of power
- IV. The Complete power (local)
- V. The World power (external recognition) and its Official Legitimation
- VI. The Consolidation of power (as foreshadowed)
- VII. The Return to the Malay World

The narration of his journey upriver illustrates the nature and strength of the British Empire as a world power. The setting of the narrative is outside the Malay world, and it highlights the power of the British Empire from the mouth of the Hoogly river to Calcutta. After briefly introducing himself and the text in the opening section, he foreshadows the power of the British by briefly referring to Benggala as a great and world-famous kingdom. The third part comprises the exposition of the power which is done continuously as he enters the city and describes five "*rantau*" at the mouth of the river, such as Kulpi, Kilakaci, falta and the two branches of the river. This part illustrates British strength in navigational systems, trade and commerce, agriculture and natural features.

The fourth part is the description of another five settlements, showing the extent of British power over local life. Among the "*negeri*" described, Calcutta is considered the supreme city, complete with its multitude of facilities such as busy markets, fine streets with their various social/religious functions, brothels and houses with beautiful parks and women, all carefully guarded by the efficient ruler, who lives in a grand palace.

The fifth part is the description of European settlements, depicting the British as a world power. Even though the cities are described as being smaller in scale than Calcutta, they represent various European political powers under British rule. He also describes how these cities were conquered. The British had to go to war with the French to capture their city, Dangga Cani Nagar; on the other hand, the cities belonging to Denmark (Serampur), Holland (Cicuda) and Portugal (Balagar) were simply taken over without any resistance.

The consolidation of the British as a world power as foreshadowed earlier in part two occupies another stage in the structure of the narrative. This is illustrated by Ahmad's account of Lord Minto, and of Calcutta as a fine and prosperous city unrivalled by other powers:

"beberapa ribu negeri yang takluk kepada baginda sekalian itu mengantar upeti genap2 tahun tiadalah khali daripada utusan pergi datang...maka dengkilah Raja Ferangsih dan Olanda dan Portugal hendak diambil, tiada kuasa melawan berperang dengan Raja Inglan sebab kawal sambang jaga segala penghulu dan pahlawan Inglan terlalu amat keras. Maka sebab itu jadi sentosalah negeri itu tiada berlawan dari atas angin sampai ke bawah angin." (1982:89/140)

After power has been consolidated, the next stage is to give it official legitimation. This is done by a letter from the paramount ruler of Europe, commenting on Lord Minto's proposal to attack Moris (Mauritius), which was then ruled by the French:

"Maka tersebutlah perkataan raja yang maha besar negeri Yuropa menyuruh beberapa banyak daripada kapal dan keci dan kapal Injaman membawak surat Yang diPertuan Yuropa kepada baginda Raja Lord Minto...Maka segera disambut oleh baginda

dengan beberapa hormat mullanya maka dibuka surat itu di hadapan segala menteri hulubalang buah negeri. Maka dibaca oleh baginda dengan nyaring suaranya mengatakan tersebut di dalam surat itu bicara daripada Lord Minto suruh mendatangi negeri Ferangsih yang bernama Moris itu sebab negeri itu beberapa saudagar dan nakhoda2 daripada Keling Melayu sekalian tiada boleh belayar mencahari makan habis ditangkab segala harta dilelong serta kapal demikianlah perintahnya orang Ferangsih itu.

Setelah baginda Raja Lord Minto menengar di dalam surat itu maka baginda pun tertawa2 seraya berkata: Niat hamba daripada selama pun demikian sekarang raja yang maha besar menyuruh apatah lagi kita cahari. ” (1982:90-92/142-144).

This is followed by the war between the British and French which ended with victory to the British. The final part of the narrative is the return to the Malay world, in which the author describes the British plan to attack Java and this extends British glory and might.

Concept of Loyalty

From the compositional structure, we may conclude that Ahmad's journey upriver is actually a journey into the hearth of British power. Ahmad writes not only to record his experience of travelling with his British employer, but more to show his personal admiration of and devotion to his British *raja* and his great kingdom. Skinner has rightly observed the following:

“Ahmad's pen may move from Calcutta to the European settlements along the Hugli and then on the Mauritius and Java, but Ahmad's heart appears to remain in Calcutta's

Government House, the istana of Ahmad's raja, the Governor-General, Lord Minto or 'Raja Benggala'...although the hikayat purports to give us a description of negeri Benggala, it is likely at any moment to turn into a panegyric on the might and majesty of Raja Benggala" (Skinner, 1982:3-4)

Skinner observes that among all the settlements, Ahmad regards Calcutta as "the city of palaces" and he devotes no less than thirty pages to it before going on to describe the other European settlements along the Hoogly north of Calcutta (1978:466). Calcutta actually means more than that to him. Ahmad sees it as a focus or dynamic centre for the world power, not only in its position as a commercial centre but also as the social, administrative and political centre of the British Empire throughout the world under the efficient leadership of the British Raja, Lord Minto:

"Beberapa zaman demikianlah perintahnya negeri Benggala itu termasyurlah ke bawah angin dan di atas angin ked[engaran] warita sampai ke benua Rum dan Mesir dan negeri benua Cina ke Mekah Medinah, sekalian orang negeri itu mari bernyaga dan berbegar demikianlah perintah kedudukan adat dan sekalian martabat, daripada muafakat segala orang Inglan orang yang akil bijaksana, orang sedikit boleh perintah sekalian negeri yang besar2 demikianlah perintah kedudukan negeri benua Benggala." (1982:4/28)

Therefore, from this perspective Ahmad is no different from traditional Malay scribes who wrote to glorify their king and his kingdom. In fact, throughout his narrative, Ahmad, consciously or not, consistently focusses on this theme, thus giving the impression that his main function and motive in writing the text is the glorification of British as the

supreme world power, unchallenged by others. Those who attempted to do so were only doomed to failure, and somehow, according to him, deserved to receive punishment:

"Dan adalah pulak suatu tempat di dalam kubu itu tempat orang taruh segala pahlawan tawanan daripada sekalian Hindustan dan daripada segala pahlawan Belanda Ingran Portugal Ferangsih yang tiada menengar titah baginda Raja Acanak itu dikurung beberapa tahun dan bulan di dalam kubu itu ditaruhnya demikianlah." (1982:42/82).

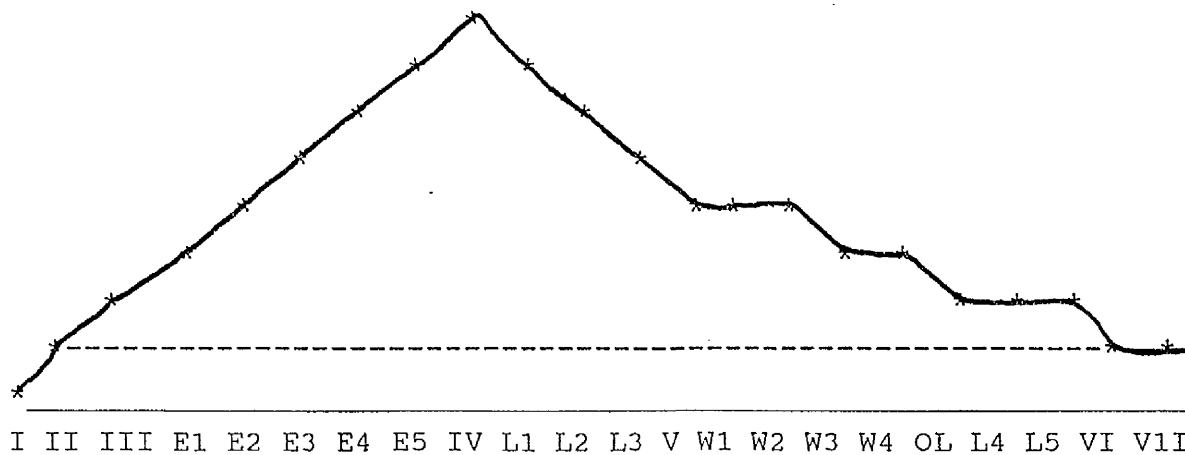
Ahmad expresses total dedication to his British king. His sense of loyalty is reflected not only in the compositional structure of the text but also in various episodes described to prove the great kingdom over other powers:

"beberapa hari berperang itu maka tewaslah negeri. Setelah dilihat oleh Raja Moris hal yang demikian maka segala kunci kota dan sekalian gedung kampeni dibubuh kepada suatu tabak perak maka diberi [kepada] tangan hulubalang maka pergilah kepada jenal Ingran serta diserahkannya segala kunci. Setelah sudah datang kunci maka disuruh palu tambur kesukaan maka dipalu oranglah terlalu gegak gempita bunyinya dan bendera alamat cogan Ingran dipernaikkan oranglah." (1982:93/146)

"Sebermula tersebutlah perkataan negeri Betawi dan Semarang setelah menengar angkatan Ingran terlalu banyak hendak mendatangi Betawi maka sekalian pun habis pindah ...sekalian takut akan segala Ingran seperti harimau yang amat lapar lakunya. Maka banyak segala hulubalang Jawa daripada bangsa Madura lebih kurang empat laksa banyaknya. Maka sekalian orang Belanda seperti ayam kasi, sungguhpun bersikap tiada melawan demikian lakunya...Maka segala hulubalang Jawa sehari2 pergi mengadap raja Belanda bertanya khabar. Maka tiadalah terbit barang suatu bicara melainkan kata2 sahaja hend[ak] melawan oleh sebab orang Ferangsih memberi tegar semangat segala Belanda, jika tiada orang Ferangsih tiadalah terduduk oleh Belanda seketika jua pun, seperti ayam takut akan helang demikianlah Belanda takut akan Ingran." (1982:97/150)

His strong confidence in a British victory in Java is clearly expressed in the above episode. So, even though his *hikayat* seems to have an "abrupt end" (Skinner 1977:204), his main task is already completed. After having given so many illustrations, it seems unnecessary for him to add another episode of a similar nature, or to narrate the whole historical episode to prove the power of his *raja*. The foreshadowing elements are sufficient to produce his intended result. Ahmad might have simply wanted to end his travelogue as it stood, hence making his style "unique" compared to other writers, for he has successfully performed his service to his king through writing.

Figure 1 - The Compositional Structure of HPNB



Exposition

E1 = Kulpi,
E2 = Kilakaci
E3 = ?
E4 = Falta
E5 = the river

Local Power

L1 = Calcutta (the Supreme)
L2 = Acanak
L3 = Damdana
L4 = Hugli
L5 = Barpur

World Power

W1 = Serampur (Denmark)
W2 = Dangga Cani Nagar (French).
W3 = Cicuda (Dutch)
W4 = Balagar (Portugal)
OL = Official legitimation (letter from the king of Europe)

New Experiences From a Conventional Perspective

Even though his journey to the Bengkulu, was a truly novel experience, Ahmad only perceives it from a conventional perspective and a traditional state of mind. Skinner has analysed Ahmad's style of writing. He notes that Ahmad's descriptions of the settlements follow very much the same pattern, and are very structured with the features presented in an extremely regular order. Skinner then concludes that Ahmad was writing with an ideal "*negeri*" in mind, a "*negeri*" characterised by the following features: (1) *Raja* ; (2) Fortress; (3) Palace; (4) Town; (5). Brothel area ; (6) Religious observances; (7) Mansions and ; (8) The countryside. The pattern is tabulated in **Table 2**.²

Table 2 also indicates that features 1,2,3,4,5,6 (which in order of sequence represent *raja*, fortress, palace, town, brothel area, religious observances, mansion and the countryside) are indispensable aspects of the settlements or towns described by Ahmad. The frequency or numbers of *pekan* (market) mentioned shows that Ahmad focusses strongly on goods or commodities traded in the towns. The fact that he accompanied an English merchant explains his strong interests in the commercial products available in the markets.

² Based on Ahmad's descriptions of the settlements, Skinner has tabulated and represented the pattern of his descriptions (Skinner 1978:478).

Skinner, however, listed only seven settlements instead of the nine settlements actually described. He has excluded Balagar and Barpur settlements which he has treated as less important compared to other settlements such as Calcutta, Barrackpore, Dum Dum, Serampore, Chandernagore, Chinsura and Hooghly (1978:476). Based on the above order of occurrences of the settlements, he finds out there is an absence of two main features there, the '*raja*' and the '*kota*'. Therefore he states that the description of Chandernagore is rather 'unbalanced' and an exception to the pattern.

My analysis of the features (refer to Table 1), however shows that even though Skinner's representation is generally accepted, it is not totally true to the descriptions in the text. There are a few weaknesses found in his table: firstly, except for Acanak, the ordering of features in all the settlements are inaccurate. Secondly, there is only one brothel described in Cicuda and not two as listed by Skinner. Thirdly, Skinner has ignored the number of times the features are described. This aspect is important indication of Ahmad's repetitive style of writing.

Settlement	Features in order of Occurrence												
1. Calcutta	[1]*	2	4(G)	3	4(5)	5	7	4(6)	6	8	7	8	
2. Acanak (Barrackpore?)	1	2	3	4(3)	5	4(2)	7						
3. Damdana (Dumdum)	1	2	4(G)*	3	4(1)	5	8	6					
4. Serampur	1	2	3	4(3)	5	7	8	6	4(1)	7	6	8	
5. Dangga Cani Nagar (Chandernagore)	(w)*	1	[2]	4(G)	7	4	(8)	5	4(1)	5	4(2)	6	
6. Cicuda (Chichuda)	1	2	4(2)	5	6								
7. Hugli (Hoogly)	1	2	4(2)	5	4(1)	7	6						
8. Balagar	1	4(G)	7	8									
9. Barpur	2												

note: [1] = in foreshadowing

(G) = general description without specific market

(?) = numbers of *pekan* (market) named

(w) = war episode between the French and British

[2] = fort was ruined/destroyed

Skinner also provides us with another interesting table consisting of the pattern of description of the brothels, to show how structured Ahmad's style is (Skinner 1978:479).³

Table 3: Brothel Areas

Settlement						
1. Calcutta	i. Daramtali market	a				
	ii. Macua Bazaar	a	b	c	d	e*
2. Acanak	Serampur	a	b			
3. Damdana	Karnali Bazaar	a	b	c	d	
4. Dangga Cani Nagar	i. Puniya Tali Lane	a	b	c	d	
	ii. Sip Tal Lane	a	c			
5. Cicuda	Kadwa Bazaar	a	c	b	d	e**
6. Hugli	Batiar Khana Lane	a	b+	c	d	

note: e* = story of seaman who is fleeced by a tavernkeeper and a prostitute

e** = story of a missing 'drunken servant' who was searched by his employer

b+ = with emphasis on the special beauty of Hindu prostitutes

Skinner's classification is not fully accurate as it gives the impression that there are seven brothel areas in the seven settlements. Actually, there are nine brothel areas mentioned in the text (refer to **Table 3**). This shows that brothels are indeed an important feature in Ahmad's account. But out of the nine settlements described, only in two settlements (Balagar and Barpur), does he not mention any brothel areas. These are the last

³

Skinner has given the descriptions of the brothels based on the following sub-sections:

- a classification of the prostitutes into three classes based upon the floor of the brothel occupied, with the first-class girls living on the top floor and so on, in descending order;
- a comment on the different attractions of the different races working in the brothels;
- the finery worn by the prostitutes and their afternoon parades;
- the musical entertainments that take place, the refreshments offered (liquor, drugs, etc.) and ensuing rowdiness (Skinner 1978:479)

two cities, by which time he has shifted his narrative focus to the preparations made by the British to attack Batavia.

Except for the three variants (e*, e** and b+), the descriptions follow the fixed features above, almost like a pattern. When the full pattern is not followed (1i, 2, 4ii), it may be the author's way of shortening the description, or it may be just a 'slip' rather than an intentionally different account.

Between Eroticism and Morality

- The Image of Women

Brothel areas seem to be an important feature of his observations and wherever he went they never escaped his attention. But this leads to an interesting question: why they never stir up his moral sensitivity or bring to his mind to some related social problems?. Ahmad only sees and enjoys the fun and pleasure found in such places. Only once does he show a kind of awareness of its potential risk of being exploited by greedy tavern-keepers, but even here his emphasis is more on the humour of the episode than its moral dimension. This can be interpreted as his "neutral" moral attitude. Ahmad seems to write more to express his "sincere" feelings without having any pretence of moralising. His radical moral attitude is also manifested in his treatment of women in the text.

Ahmad has focussed on women as sexual objects and his strong inclination for sexual attractions is clearly manifested in his descriptions of women at various places:

"Maka jalang [itu] amat banyak bangsanya ada daripada bangsa Patan dan Mughal Hindustan dan Benggali dan Hindu. Maka bangsa Hindu tiga bagai, suatu hitam rupanya

dan suatu itu seperti kebanyakan orang dan suatu bangsa itu terlalu amat baik rupanya tiadalah samanya seorang jua pun, seperti bidadari Sekerba turun dari Indera kayangan, warna tubuhnya seperti limau yang masak demikianlah rupanya....maka beberapa banyak daripada anak2 nawab dan wazir menjadi gila birahi sebab perempuan Hindu yang baik parasnya....Maka tatkala masa ia keluar berjalan di atas tingkat itu maka gemerlapanlah cahaya pakaiannya itu oleh padan sekali sikap rupanya. Maka duduklah ia bernyanyi maka suaranya terlalu amat merdu seperti buluh perindu memberi ghairat hati sekalian memandang dia. Maka tatkala masa itu jika alim janggut panjang sepuluh hasta sekalipun jika terpandang menjadi gila birahi; beberapa banyak daripada Arab dan Ajam yang mabuk birahi akan jalang itu.” (1982:81-82/130)

Not only do their beautiful bodies attract his attention, their voices are also seductive to his ear:

“Maka segala perempuan jalang yang baik suaranya menyanyi seperti kumbang menyering bunga merdu suaranya. Maka sekalian yang birahi seperti dilepas tangkai hatinya turun pergi kerumah jalang tiadalah sedar akan dirinya daripada sangat merdu suaranya seperti segara madu lakunya makin tengah malam makin manis demikianlah diceterakan oleh yang empunya cetera ini.” (1982:66-67/114)

In his narrative, Ahmad perceives women only as sexual objects, for fun and pleasure. Skinner describes him as a rather gullible ‘*homme moyen sensuel*’, whose only claim to possessing a personality of his own is his weakness for a pretty face (1982:4). His descriptions of their activities, especially in the bathing and brothel scenes, are restricted to their sexual attractions and are rather stereotyped and repetitive.

"Maka segala puteri2 Portugal disitulah turun bersiram terlalulah amat ramainya bersembur semburan maka terserlahlah sekali rupanya puteri sekalian seperti bidadari turun dari negeri kayangan lakunya. Maka barang siapa melihat rupanya puteri2 itu maka sekalian heran termanggu tiada khabarkan diri seketika. Setelah sudah bersiram maka sakalian puteri pun naiklah memakai seberhana pakaian yang indah2 ada memakai daripada kain matabi emas dan setengah memakai matabi perak setengah kesumba dan setengah ungu. Maka setelah sudah memakai maka sekalian memakai bau bauan terlalulah amat harum baunya seperti dapat diminum rupanya. Setelah sudah memakai maka sekalian berjalan mengentas bunga2an terlalu amat banyak berkembang sepanjang jalan itu seperti sudah digubah lakunya sekalian bunga bungaan itu. Telah sudah bermain termasa maka sekalian pun berjalan pulang lakunya seperti itik pulang petang ada yang melambai ada yang melenggang sekalian padan patut sekali barang lakunya tiadalah janggal."
(1982:88/138)

In his visit to several markets, he found that women were also actively involved in trading. Nevertheless, Ahmad does not concern himself with their economic activities for he is only attracted by their sexuality. This is made clear in his visit to Botol Khana market:

"Maka yang menjual dagangan itu perempuan yang banyak berjual. Maka sekalian perempuan Hindu di tanah Benggali memakai kain jarang seperti ayakan dipakainya sehingga atas lututnya, jika datang angin terbukalah segala kainnya lebih ma'lum tuan2 yang membaca dia perintah perempuan Hindu Benggali, jika orang yang baharu masuk pergi hampir rumahnnya maka pura2 dibukanya annyur gading dihalanya kepada orang itu supaya naik asyik birahi hatinya." (1982:24/54)

His observations on the physical attractions of women from various ethnic groups are more specific and “original”, expressing his own personal preference for Hindu women, and at the same time culturally stereotyping others:

“Maka akan bangsa Mughal itu terlalu amat putih tetapi kurang laksananya. Maka bangsa Hindustan itu rupanya sederhana, dan bangsa Patan itu tiadalah berapa indah rupanya sederhana kebanyakan orang dan daripada bangsa Benggali itu sungguhpun ada yang baik rupanya maka pakaiannya...Dan bangsa Hindu Baman itu terlalulah baik rupanya seperti akan dapat diminum laksana bidadari Sekerna sekalian pakaian terlalu amat patut padan putih kuning seperti bunga Wijaya Mala sekalian memandang menaruh ashik benudam. Dan bangsa Kayit itu sederhana jugak rupanya dan suatu bangsa namanya Awadi maka pakaiannya terlalu hodoh seperti kain yang dipakainya sehingga lututnya, dan kain pun amat halus lagi amat jarang itulah dipakainya. Maka tatkala segala sipai dan dagang dan orang muda2 lalu pada lorong itu maka dibukanya kain seainya dan kelihatanlah annyur gading terlalulah indah rupanya seperti dilarik rupanya memberi hati segala dagang gila birahi.” (1982:26-27/58)

“Maka segala puteri Inglan sungguhpun putih terlalulah amat putihnya dan segala rambut pun merah, adalah terkurang laksananya. Dan segala puteri Ferangsih peranakan negeri itu putih kuning sadu perdana dan rambutnya amat lagi hitam dan giginya seperti biji delima rupanya. Jika barang siapa lalulah pada jalan itu maka kayallah ia seketika tiada khabarkan dirinya demikianlah keelokan segala puteri itu; jika bunga seri gading; jika orang tiada beberapa tetap hatinya menjadi gila kesmaran daripada sangat indah2 rupanya tiadalah berbanding...” (1982:65/110)

Ahmad's "obsession" with women is proven when he uses the "beautiful virgin" as a metaphor to describe the Calcutta fort:

"Maka kota Kalkata itu seperti laku anak dara yang baik rupanya, beberapa raja2 daripada sekalian bangsa asyik birahi melihat kota itu, hendak dilanggar tiada kuasa sebab kawal dan sambang terlalu jaga, tiadalah boleh daripada pandai segala Inglan memerintahkan ..." (1982:13/40)

Another female analogy - but this time with negative connotations- is used to describe the men of Marata settlement who were cowards and made sneak attacks:

"terlalu banyak pahlawan yang megah2 di dalam kota itu tetapi segala Marata itu tiadalah berani berlawan bertentang perang sehingga di dalam curi juga ia mari mengamuk kemudian ia lari demikianlah perintah segala Marata itu seperti perempuan lakunya berperang di dalam curi." (1982:90/140)

Ahmad's expressions may be interpreted as being comparatively explicit and radical compared to conventional writings of the period. Ahmad's travelogue has given a slightly different treatment to the theme of prostitution, and the author has displayed a neutral attitude to the moral function of literature. These, literary innovations, however, are still manifested within conventional styles of expression.

Conventional Styles and Expressions

Ahmad does not show any imaginative power or creativity in narrative techniques and styles of expression. He repeatedly uses several common conventional expressions to emphasize, or simply to exaggerate, his subject matter:

"Sebermula kapal masuk ke dalam negeri itu tiadalah berputusan siang dan malam tiada berhenti pergi datang beribu2 kapal masuk terbit dan dibarat ditimur dan di atas dan ke bawah angin daripada beberapa bulan pelayaran sekalian mari bernyaga kepada negeri itu tiadalah terhisabkan banyaknya." (1982:5/28) [Underlining mine]

"Sebermula maka adalah air sungai itu terlalulah sangat tawarnya daripada sebab hulu sungai itu terlalulah amat jauhnya beberapa tahun pelayaran jauhnya tiadalah pernah siapa2 yang sampai kepada hulunya entah ke mana2 jauh perginya." (1982:6/30) [Underlining mine]

"Sebermula maka sepanjang desa teluk rantau itu beberapa kampung dan dusun segala Benggali dan Hindu terlalu banyaknya tiadalah terhisab lagi." (1982:10/36) [Underlining mine]

These common conventional cliches, using superlative adjectives to give a measure of infinity in terms of size, length and quantity, hence impart a sense of extraordinariness to the subject described. But Ahmad simply uses the expressions without giving them any fresh applications. He uses several conventional metaphors in his descriptions to create certain "romantic" images of the past, such as "*seperti bidadari*", "*seperti kayangan*" and "*seperti kiamat bunyinya*." Popular Malay proverbs are also utilised :

"Maka kolam itu terlalulah indah2 perbuatannya maka pohon tal itu diatur berbanjar2 seperti bunga dikarang lakunya terlalu indah dipandang daripada laut seperti bulan dipagar bintang lakunya demikian rupanya keelokan rantau Kulpi." (1982:8/32) [Underlining mine]

"Maka sekalian orang tabut itu berjalanlah menuju padang Kerbala namanya seperti ombak mengalun rupanya." (1982:36/74)

[Underlining mine]

"maka adalah tempat orang Hindu perbuat periuk belanga terlalulah amat banyaknya bertimbun2 seperti pulau yang amat tinggi demikianlah rupanya." (1982:10/36)

[Underlining mine]

Ahmad also makes a few attempts to create new metaphors, such as, "*seperti bangau melihat burung rajawali*" (1982:13/40), "*seperti garuda membuka sayapnya*" (1982:46/86); and "*seperti lalat jika dicampak pasir tiadalah jatuh ke bumi.*" (1982:70/116). Unfortunately these metaphors, though effective in their representation, are too few to make any significant impact on his general style of description and narration.

Ahmad also composes a set of original *pantun* as a dialogue between a sailor and a whore in one of his more lively episodes (refer to pages 31/64-32/66). The *pantun* may not be accepted as good Malay *pantun*,⁴ nevertheless, the insertion of the *pantun* gives readers a short break from the monotony of his narration:

Maka berpantunlah jalang itu:

jika sepuluh meragi kain

rama2 di dalam puan;

jika sepuluh datang yang lain

manakah sama denganmu tuan?

⁴ For a discussion on the aesthetics of Malay *pantun*, see Muhammad (1991:27-40).

Maka dibalas oleh khelasi itu:

*Kijang jantan dihambat kulana,
mati berjaga di gandasuli;
adek jangan bercinta behina,
segera jugak abang kemari.*

Maka dibalas oleh jalang itu:

*Kuda teji pandai berteji,
kuda kenaikan Seri Rama;
abang mari kita berjanji
maukah mia mati bersama.*

Maka dibalas oleh kelasi itu:

*sega saya berpadi2,
tanam halia tiada tumbuh;
sega saya bermati2
setia tuan tiada akan sungguh.*

Maka bibi jalang pun mengempaskan pungkurnya ke tanah seraya berpantun:

*Budak kundang kuda ranjita
pandai bertandak ragam kesakti;
bukan sengaja saya berkata,
bagai mustahak di dalam hati.*

Maka jawab mia khelasi itu:

*Jika tak tumbuh peria melata
orang Jawa makan kepayang
jika sungguh bagai dikata
membuang nyawa abang tak sayang.*

Maka dibalas oleh bibi jalang:

*Ayam denak di bawah tangga,
makan padi jemput berjemput
jika benar budi bicara
jalan mati adinda ikut.*

(Skinner 1982:64-66)

His attempt to create a sense of humour in the episode of the missing drunken servants who were searched by their employer, is also functional in giving a fresh change in the style of narration, and at the same time entertaining his readers:

"Setelah segala orang besar2 bangkit dilihat seorang pun tiada kasmadar. Maka disuruhnya ikut kepada segala matamata dan jemedar maka sekalian pun pergilah mencahari segenap lorong. Maka dikhabarkan oranglah segala kasmadar ada di rumah jalang, tengah ia sangat mabuk. Maka berhimpun dua tiga puluh matamata dipegang tangan segala mereka itu dibawak mengadap segala orang besar2 itu. Maka kata orang besar2 itu: Hai sekalian ke mana engkau pergi? Maka daripada sangat mabuk maka katanya: Hamba sekalian pergi melihat bidadari Sekerba turun dari kayangan, tuanku. Maka kata segala Inglan: Di manatah dapat bidadari di dalam dunia ini? Maka sekalian

berkata: Terlebih sedikit pulak daripada bidadari itu. Maka kata segala orang besar2: Di mana ada yang lebih baik daripada bidadari itu? Maka kata segala mereka itu: Adalah, tuanku, di balik jalan besar yang bernama Kaduwa Bajar itulah yang bernama bibi kasbi jalang itu. Setelah segala orang besar2 Inglan menengar kata yang demikian maka sekalipun tertawa seperti batu roboh lakunya sebab menengar rumah jalang itu."
(1982:77/ 124-126)

Notion of Self

The most popular and significant conventional expression which Ahmad inherits and continues to use is the phrase used for self reference, "*yang empunya cerita*" (the possessor of the story). This is the traditional historical method of reference that honours the writers' sources and forebears and at the same time helps to demonstrate his literary decorum and humility by not taking any credit for his composition (Muhammad Haji Salleh 1991:19).⁵

The third person narrator mode in HPNB is similar to the traditional context in which an author usually wrote based on cumulative works of joint-authorship. Ahmad, on the other hand, wrote based on his own direct personal experience, therefore the first person pronoun could be deemed more 'appropriate' for his narrative.⁶ However, Ahmad, who is still strongly bound by conventional perspectives of self reference, finds it difficult to break

⁵

Muhammad has discussed the meanings of self reference in traditional Malay literature:

"It is well-known among the Malays that no direct reference should be made in the first person singular, except in the most humble forms. All the first person pronouns invariably reduce the person to the lowest level of humility... That the author addresses himself in the third person(almost as though he is talking of another), is technically significant too. He is distanced, to effectively avoid focus on himself, and to some extent even helps to achieve a measure of objectivity for his work. Furthermore, for the Malay, it is unbecoming to mention or discuss oneself directly. A person must submerge himself in the general community, which always takes precedence." (Muhammad Haji Salleh 1991:10-11)

⁶

In Skinner's translation of the text, this 3rd person pronoun or narrator has been changed to first person, 'I' (Skinner, 1982).

from such traditions even in order to give a direct narration of his own experience. He consistently or repeatedly (about 30 times) uses this pronoun throughout his narration. His third person pronoun is an indication that direct and explicit self-expression or an ego-conscious style is still an "unexplored" literary phenomenon in his time. Other common conventional phrases used are: "*demikianlah adat negeri itu*" (at least 9 times); "*demikianlah perintahnya tempat itu*" (13 times) and "*maka tersebutlah*". (20 times).

Nevertheless, Ahmad has made shift not only by writing based on direct personal experience; moreover, though using conventional styles of self-reference, he expresses his personal admiration for the great power of the British Empire and manifestes his personal sexual preference for and enjoyment of the colour, fun and pleasures of city life.

Judgement-Free Descriptions

Skinner has compared Ahmad to Abdullah and finds that "*he is not a historian, nor does he possess the journalistic flair and fire of Abdullah*" and does not display any intellectual curiosity (1982:4,7). Skinner's observation can be reiterated if we analyze Ahmad's reactions to several superstitious elements he encounters and describes in the text (see pages 7/32; 11/36; and 55/98).

Unlike Abdullah, who would seek further information and then give his own opinions, Ahmad simply records such information without giving his personal comments. Even some important religious places (such as temples and churches) and festivals such as "*Maulai Rasta or Karbala Rasta*" (1982:36/72), the festival of *gathaks* and celebrations in the months of *Subirat* and *Muharam*, are simply described in a matter-of-fact way.

Influence of Panji Tales

Based on a handful of literary references found in the *hikayat*, Skinner points out that Ahmad was acquainted with a Malay version of the Ramayana, perhaps with a Kedah “*penglipur lara*” version, and that he drew either directly or indirectly upon the *Panji* romances in describing the charms of the young ladies at Calcutta (Skinner 1978:474-5).

The influence of Panji stories is found in his description of women in a flower garden. In several garden scenes, he describes beautiful women as “*bidadari*” whose main activities are bathing, dressing beautifully, picking flowers and having fun:

“Maka sekalian puteri2 Ingran turun mandi pada kolam itu bersemburan2an bersukaan terlalu ramainya, seperti bidadari sekerba turun mandi di kolam anta beranta demikianlah lakunya ada yang berenang memintas susur kolam itu ada yang mandi berlimau terlalulah ramainya. Maka adalah pulak di susur taman itu ditanamnya bunga2an berbanjaran seperti diatur rupanya serba aneka jenis daripada bungaan. Setelah sudah mandi bersiram maka naiklah segala puteri2 itu mengentas bunga2an ada yang mengentas bunga air mawar ada yang mengentas bunga cempaka kuning dan cempaka gading ada yang mengentas bunga melur dudun; setengah mengentas bunga...ada yang mengail ikan pada kolam itu; ada yang mengentas bunga ada yang dipertajukkan masing2 pada kesukaannya; ada yang dipersuntingkan. Maka adalah pulak di susur taman itu beberapa jenis daripada buah buahan bermasakan ada yang melelai buah biara, ada yang melelai buah delima ada yang melelai buah anggur terlalulah ramai sekalian puteri bersuka termasa di dalam taman itu.” (1982:39/40/78)

"Maka sekalian puteri Ingran turun bersiram pada kolam itu bersembur semburan terlalulah ramainya sepertikan kiamat lakunya. Setelah sudah bersiram maka memakai seberhana pakaian terlalu indah2 pakaiannya seperti merak akan mengigal rupanya. Setelah memakai maka memakai bau bauan terlalulah amat harum baunya. Setelah sudah berjalanlah mengelilingi taman itu ada yang mengentas bunga cempaka mas ada mengentas bunga peridi ada mengentas seroja dan bunga melur susun dan bunga gulam air mawar berbagai2 aneka rupanya seperti laksana taman Banjaran Sari lakunya tiadalah dapat dibagikan lagi indahnya dan amat behinanya negeri itu." (1982:84/134)

Compare these to the following description from the *Hikayat Panji Semirang*:

"Pada suatu hari masing-masing hendak bermain-main ke dalam taman Banjaran Sari hendak memetik bunga-bunga. Masing-masing pun memakai pakaian dengan selengkapnya dan Galuh Cendera Kirana serta Galuh Ajeng pun dihiasi orang amat baik parasnya seperti rupa bidadari keinderaan turun ke dalam dunia. Setelah sudah memakai dan berhias itu, lalu berjalan mereka itu masuk ke dalam taman Banjaran sari serta diiringkan oleh Ken Bayan dan Ken Sanggit dan Paduka Mahadewa serta permaisuri dan Paduka Liku pun mengiringkan Sang Ratu, sedang berjalan hendak masuk ke dalam taman Banjaransari itu....Pada masa itu bermain-mainlah mereka itu ke sana ke mari di dalam taman Banjaransari itu serta memetik bunga-bunga yang harum baunya dan elok rupanya seperti mengubah dan terukir. Ramailah dayang-dayang dan mak inang pengasuh dan biti-biti perwara dan anak-anak dara memetik bunga-bunga yang bertangkai-tangkai, bungkusan bunga itu dari kain sutera kuning dan dari selampai yang berwarna merah jambu dan dari sutera hijau dan adalah pula bungkusan yang dari kain bersongket bertabur benang emas berbagai-bagai macamnya, inang pengasuh itu bersukacita dan

riang. Ken Kebayan dan Ken Sanggit mengikuti Tuan Puteri Cendera Kirana itu sambil membungkusi segala bunga-bunga itu dengan riangnya serta banyaklah segala bunga-bunga itu dengan riangnya serta banyaklah diperolehi bunga-bunga yang dipetikanya itu." (Noriah Mohamed 1992:8-9)

Therefore, in his description of the flower garden, Ahmad has used some similar words such as "*bidadari*", "*taman banjaran sari*" and "*terlalu ramai*"; and he has also employed similar literary images of the colourful variety of flowers and the joy of beautiful women in the garden.

Another similarity between his travelogue and *panji* tales is in the element of eroticism. Panji stories are popular for their erotic elements (Ras 1992:104-154; Liaw 1991:134; and Noriah Mohd, 1992). Some of these erotic elements are also found in HPNB as discussed above in his image of women.

Distinct Themes and Genre

Ahmad's focus on women, especially on the life of "*jalang*" (whores) is very interesting. This subject matter is later developed and becomes popular in modern Malay literature, especially in novel writing in which a prostitute has frequently been chosen as protagonist. Does Ahmad pioneer this type of literature? His emphasis on sexual attractions reminds us of popular erotic literature, *sastera lucah*, which is also a significant genre in modern literature. Does his travelogue, which contains no moral pretensions on the issue, initiate such works?

One thing which is clear is that, with the exception of the motif of British power, Ahmad's work is more an expression of personal observation and pleasure. He was very much impressed by the British power and was charmed by the women in the British kingdom. The literary conventions of love and adventure, in searching for a true lover and self-maturity, as found in the *Panji* tales or other romantic *hikayats*, have been slightly modified into the form of a personal travelogue combined with a discourse on political colonial power and the seduction of women, as a manifestation of personal perceptions and feelings. These distinct features are observed in his narrative.

Conclusions

Based on his own real life experiences and perhaps modelled upon the *Panji* tales, Ahmad wanted to recreate the romantic and idealistic life of the palace, complete with its great king and beautiful women in the kingdom. He has changed the supernatural Malay king to Raja Inland, the setting of "*keinderaan/kayangan*" to the Negeri Bengkulu, the beauty of "*bidadari*" to the "*jalang*" and the adventures of "*putera and puteri*" to his own travels; and has given his own account of the world he created in his travelogue, thus imbuing it with a personal colouring. He was standing in a real world and witnessing actual historical events and happenings. yet, he still perceived that world from a conventional perspective and a traditional state of mind.

Ahmad Rijaluddin has attempted to document his observations and his dedication to his British king by using conventional modes of expressions, and has focussed on the beauty of women in brothels and flower gardens to fulfill his personal interests and desires. Unfortunately, he lacks the imaginative power and creative skills which are normally

possessed by good authors. His significant difference, however, is that writing to him is not a moral commitment, or mainly for didactic function, but more as a manifestation of his impressionistic and romantic worldview and as an expression of personal feelings.

CHAPTER 7

SURAT KETERANGAN SYEIKH JALALUDDIN

Introduction

Surat Keterangan Syekh Jalaluddin (SKSJ) is the focus of this chapter. SKSJ was written by Fakhir Saghir in 1829 or earlier. The text exists in two manuscripts, one of which was copied in 1829 in Batavia (Cod.Or.1743) while the other (Or.6138) is undated but must have been written after 1821, the date after which the Dutch had come to be involved in West Sumatran affairs. Both manuscripts are kept at the library of the University of Leiden, Holland.

The text was first mentioned as a piece of literature in 1845 by de Hollander. In 1847, some excerpts were printed by Meursinge. In 1856, de Hollander first produced excerpts based on the Batavia copy, and in 1857 published a full Jawi edition in Leiden based on the other manuscript. The manuscripts were later described by Juynboll (1899) and van Ronkel (1921). After a long pause of seventy one years, the text is once again brought to our attention by a challenging article by Kratz in 1992. He and Ariyetti Amir have prepared a new edition of the text which will be the first romanised edition (Kratz 1992:33, forthcoming:3).¹

So far very little is known about the text. According to Kratz and Amir, the exact date, place and motive of writing of SKSJ are still unknown. The information provided by

¹ All quotations of this *Surat Keterangan* in this chapter are from their romanised edition (forthcoming).

the text is too scanty and not detailed enough to enable them to discern any clear hypothesis (forthcoming:10). Nevertheless, they are of the opinion that SKSJ is a unique historical and literary document:

“Yang jelas, Surat Keterangan Syekh Jalaluddin merupakan sebuah dokumen sejarah yang unik dan sebuah dokumen sastra yang dapat dibandingkan secara positif dengan karangan biografis dan otobiografis sezamannya seperti misalnya Hikayat Nakhoda Muda (Drewes 1961) yang disusun pada tahun 1788.” (forthcoming:10-11)

Thus, this chapter attempts to add to their earlier findings by further analyzing the text as a literary document, focussing on the concept of authorship and the notion of self, based on their edition of the text.

Concept of Authorship

Objectives of the Narrative

The author explains the scope of the *Surat* as follows:

“Akan halnya cerita ini peri menyatakan asal kembang ilmu syariat dan hakikat, dan asal teguh larangan dan pegangan, dan asal berdiri agama Allah dan agama Rasullah daripada awalnya lalu kepada akhirnya, lalu kepada perang hitam dan putih hingga keluar Kompeni Wolanda ke Tanah Darat ini adanya.” (forthcoming:31)

Based on the *Surat* itself, we can state that it was written with several objectives in mind: firstly, the author wants to inform the Dutch Company of his position in the religious conflict, and the urgency of the matters raised in the *Surat*:

"Dan kini tuan2 orang Kompeni sudah tahu, maka itulah besarnya pekerjaan seperti hukum yang sabit dalam surat keterangan ini." (forthcoming:60)

Secondly, he wants to show that his life is in great danger and he is therefore in need of help:

"dan diri saya ini nyatalah kesudah2han daif mahanusia" (forthcoming:60)

Thirdly, he seeks Dutch assistance in his task:

"Sebab itu dangan seboleh2nya permintaan saya, hendaklah tuan tolong jua saya menguatkan pekerjaan yang dipetaruhkan Tuanku itu." (forthcoming:60)

These are the explicit aims of the story, which reflect the author's clear awareness of the role and function of literature for religious and political purposes. However, a close reading of the text reveals his implicit and deeply-seated aim: to project an image of himself as a man of knowledge, and as sincere, courageous, capable and selfless leader whose only aim in life was only to serve and fight for religious truth. Literature is therefore utilised as a subtle but effective instrument or means for advancing his personal motives and interests.

Notion of Self

Self as Centre of Narration

Even though the author talks about his father, Tuanku nan Tuho, as the most respected and important religious figure within the religious scenario described, this is more to further his intended aim of enhancing his own self image, especially when we consider the fact that by the time he wrote the letter his father had already passed away. SKSJ provides us with an

interesting autobiographical account of Syekh Jalaluddin since childhood, particularly his intellectual development and religious involvement. His life is one of the main themes or focuses of the story:

“Bahwa inilah cerita daripada saya, Fakih Saghir’Alamiyat Tuanku Saming Syekh Jalaludin Ahmad Koto Tuho adanya.” (forthcoming:31)

“inilah [keter] suatu keterangan daripada segala ihwal diri saya” (forthcoming:60)

What are “*segala ihwal diri saya*” written in his *Surat*?

The author describes his religious education and background, especially his close and direct association with certain well-known religious leaders:

“Adapun saya, Fakih Saghir, adalah saya bertemu dengan Tuanku di Mansiang nan Tuho sekali2 dan Tuanku nan keramat dalam nagari Kota Gadang pada masa umur saya kecil dan Tuanku di Sumani serta saya mengambil ilmu pula adanya.” (forthcoming:32)

He also informs us of his mastery of religious knowledge which according to him was widely acknowledged by, and had benefited, many of his people:

“Maka sebab beberapa kali tamat saya me’ajarkan ilmu fiqh itu, mengertilah saya apa2 perkataan yang sabit dalam kitab itu.” (forthcoming:34)

“Telah saya duduk bersenang2 mehafaz ilmu fiqh. Itu pun saya telah dimasyhurkan orang pandai memafhumkan ilmu fiqh pada saya muda umur sekali2. Maka sebab itu banyaklah orang berhimpun2 kepada tempat itu.” (forthcoming:34)

He also tells how he became interested in teaching and spreading Islam:

“Maka sebab itu jua digarakkan Allah terbitlah dalam pikir hati saya, Faqih Saghir, yaitu hendak mendirikan agama Allah dan agama Rasullah, dan membaiki tertib dan wara’, dan membuangkan sekalian perbuatan yang jahat dan perangai yang kaji, dan membaiki tempat dan mesjid “ (fortcoming:35)

Then, he explains his religious efforts or activities:

“Maka bersungguh2lah saya menyuruhkan orang sembahyang hingga sampai berdiri jumat dua belas orang, dan menyuruhkan orang menunaikan zakat serta membahagikan kepada segala fakir dan miskin.” (fortcoming:35)

Because of his ability, he was chosen as a “*kepala bermulut*” (spokesman) for his group:

“Saya Fakih Saghir seperti demikian pula, sebab ada jua saya menurut daripada saya punya bapa. Lagi saya dijadikan kepala bermulut oleh Tuanku2 nan Tuho berperda’wakan orang nan ditangkap dan orang yang nan dirampas. Di mana-mana larangan itu dibinasakan orang.” (fortcoming:33) [underlining mine]

However, he received some negative responses:

“Sebab banyak2 terbit hujat dan burhan daripada saya banyaklah asung fitnah dalam nagari, dan banyak[lah] pulalah bantahan mereka itu. Maka jadilah saya dibuangkan orang, dan beberapa kali disarangnya saya punya madrasah.” (fortcoming:36)

But those responses do not deter his spirit; instead, he displays a certain intellectual courage, as described in a few events. For example, when his father wanted to go to *nagari Air Terbit* to help Tuanku Haji Miskin who faced problems in his religious mission, the people of *Air Terbit* were fearful that his father would attack them as he had done at *Nagari Taram*. Therefore, when he arrived at *nagari Mungo Handalas*, he was requested not to go by *Penghulu2*, *Tuanku*, *imam* and *khatib*. Fakih Saghir stood up and explained his father's good intentions. He even challenged them and because of this, he was given the title "*Fakih Saghir*" or the little scholar.

His earlier success in teaching Islam encouraged him to extend the scope of their religious activities:

"Fihak kepada saya, Fakih Saghir, daripada sangat rindu hati kepada bertambah2 agama serta sangat suka sebab bertambah2 kaum, itu pun terbitlah dalam pikir hati saya, hendak menagahkan orang menyabung dan minum tuak juga, dan sekalian pekerjaan yang tidak dihalalkan Allah dan Rasullah." (forthcoming:40)

Even though his mosque and madrasah were burned down by people who retaliated against his efforts, his religious spirit, perserverance and dedication remained undisturbed:

"Maka kata saya, Fakih Saghir, 'Wah, Tuanku (Tuanku di Kubu Sanang) adakah tidak Tuan ketahui di dalam Quran yaini tidak syentosya akan daya Allah melainkan seman yang tidak iman akan Allah hanya dan bagaimanalah Tuan sangat masyghul daripada hiru hara dunia ini? Mara sabarlah Tuan daripada apa2 hukum Allah dan daripada hiru hara sekalian mahanusia ini bahwa sesungguhnya setengah daripada tanda mu'min yang pilihan menahan cobaan jua hal adanya. Fihak kepada agama kita akan runtuh janganlah Tuan

rusuhkan; dan jikalau sebalum datar sekalian bukit ini insya Allah ta'ala balum dihabiskan Allah agama ini.'" (fortcoming:41)

Fakih Saghir also tells describes his initiative and strategy to attract to Islam those in society perceived as being of lower cultural status:

"saya memanggil orang nan tiga buah nagari ya'ni orang Salo dan Orang Mage' dan orang Kota Baharu supaya nak hampir bertolong2an mereka dengan Tuanku nan Renceh adanya. Lagi pula pikir hati saya, barangkali mau mereka itu bersungguh2 mendirikan agama sebab ada mereka itu harab akan beroleh darjat yang a'la pada dunia dan akhirat, karena mereka itu adalah hina sedikit pada adanya. Lagi ada mereka itu dikatakan orang Titalang kerbau nan tiga kandang namanya." (fortcoming:45)

His religious conviction and dedication was so strong that he was even willing to fight for the cause:

"Biarkah saya bicarakan jua ke kiri dan ke kanan barang mana daya saya dayakan jua mesjid nan runtuh. Janganlah Tuan hibakan nagari akan binasa. Inilah tandanya insya'Allah ta'ala dengan parang jua kita sudahi nan patubnya." (fortcoming:42)

"Jikalau tidak kita jadikan parang sekarang ini jua, tidaklah habis malu kita yang terdahulu lalu kepada anak cucu kita, dan sampailah habis larangan dan pegangan. Baiklah kita pasang jua sekarang, barangkali ia luka dan mati akan balas mesjid kita nan runtuh." (fortcoming:42)

From the excerpts quoted above, the author has managed to paint a positive image of himself as a knowledgeable, courageous and dedicated religious leader. Even though the text is addressed to the Dutch Company, as his postulated audience, he knows that he has to project a positive self-image which is acceptable not only to the Company but also to the group which he represents. He can only achieve his objectives by proving his importance as a rightful and respected religious leader. Fakih Saghir is fully aware of the cultural ethos and religious teaching which prohibits baseless self-projection and condemns self-glorification. Therefore, in order to reinforce his positive self-image, he has to deploy a special literary device - by selective descriptions of him by others. This narrative technique is clearly utilised in his narration to project his intended self-image.

Image of Self through the Eyes of Others

Fakih Saghir is a religiously educated person who is well aware of his culture and social ethos. His knowledge of Malay adat is manifested in the following scene:

"Maka kata saya, 'Fakih Saghir memohonkan ampun', serta saya berdiri mendapatkan sembah seperti adat orang Melayu jua halnya,'" (forthcoming:38)

He makes a few attempts to show his knowledge of the conventional social decorum expected from a cultured person in his community. This is firstly conveyed in his *Mukadimah*:

"...dimulai dengan perkataan yang fasihat, yang terbit daripada hati yang suci lagi <haning2 lagi> jernih, dituliskan dengan fil yang khalis daripada segala ihwal, dipesertakan dengan muka yang manis lagi dihiasi dengan sebaik2 mukadimah, serta baik

nalam dan tertib seperti intan yang ditatah dengan lembaganya lagi dipersalokanyang tidak kazib dan khianat hanya semata2 khilaf dan lupa..." (fortcoming:31)

With such knowledge and understanding of Malay decorum, we may assume that Fakih Saghir should also have known the social and religious prohibition of self-glorification. Caught between such an awareness and need to justify his religious and political actions to his audience (the Dutch Company and his own community), his accounts of himself have to kept within a socially-acceptable limit. Beyond such a limit, he has to turn to the mouths of "others" to describe himself. There are a few examples of descriptions of himself by others in the text:

"akan Tuanku nan Tuho Rahib Tuho namanya; dan akan saya, Fakih Saghir, Raja kafir dan Raja Yazidi pula dinamakannya." (fortcoming:51)

Besides such "humiliating" titles given to him, he also includes a few remarks about himself uttered by his enemies:

"Jikalau tidak kita alahkan nagari Empat Angkat semuhanya niscaya sangat tekaburnya kepada kita, d(an) sekalian kita ini hina semuhanya. Barangkali Fakih Saghir itu menjadi raja besar akhirnya dan sekalian kita menjadi ra'yatnya." (fortcoming:57)

"Jikalau tidak mati jua Fakih Saghir ini, tidak mumkin kita me'alahkan kampungnya dan tidak ia mau tunduk kepada kita..." (fortcoming:57-58)

Through the mouths of his enemies and others, he manages to reinforce the positive image of himself as a religious teacher, a brave and perservering leader and religious fighter, and a very loyal and obedient son. He shows constant humility, and even though

there is an element of self-importance, this may not be in the explicit form of self-glorification. His method is very subtle, as his mode of self-expression is always kept within accepted social and religious norms.

Fakih Saghir knows the local ethos well and he has utilised this knowledge to project his image. He cleverly and confidently uses his own social image, descriptions of himself by others, and his own hope and judgement on his life to project his selected or intended self-image. In fact he has achieved a balance between the need to display his self-importance (in order to get proper attention and help from the Dutch) and his awareness of social conventions and the religious prohibition of self-glorification, especially when he aims to project himself as truly religious scholar and social reformer.

In addition to such literary devices, Fakih Saghir has also used other conventional literary styles and imagery to achieve his aims, including some conventions of court literature.

Self-image under the shadow of Istana

Even though his theme has moved from *istana* centric to religious issues, his perception is still tinted by *istana* colouring. He sees his father as a great king who ruled a kingdom with special miraculous power:

“Tidak sepatutnya pekerjaan kamu seperti ini rupanya. Adakah tidak tahu kamu akan bahwa sesungguhnya Syekh kita ini aulia Allah Sultan Alam namanya ? Dan tidak pulakah tahu kamu akan besar keramatnya dan bekas kerajaannya?” (forthcoming:38)
[underlining mine]

Even though he describes his father within the conventional framework, his religious perspective has slightly modified the conventional royal attributes. The miraculous power of “*daulat*” traditionally ascribed to a *Sultan* has now been changed to “*keramat*”, a special magical power which is normally believed to be found among prophets and saints. Yet the religious leaders are still perceived and described in traditional perspectives and terms.

How does Fakih Saghir see himself within this perspective? He includes others’ perceptions of himself which actually reflect his special position in society. He purposely includes them to emphasize his self-importance; he is indirectly and subconsciously “proud” of such accusations and perceptions because the worse the accusations, the greater is his potential and ability evaluated and recognised by his enemies or rivals. The slanderous epithets of “*raja kafir*” or “*raja besar*” actually imply that his enemies recognise his great leadership qualities and fear these as the greatest threat to their power:

“Dan memasyurkan mereka itu akan Tuanku nan Tuho, Rahib Tuho namanya; dan akan saya, Fakih Saghir, Raja Kafir dan Raja Yazidi pula namanya.” (forthcoming:51)
[underlining mine]

“Jikalau tidak kita alahkan nagari Empat Angkat semuhanya niscaya sangat tekaburnya kepada kita, d(an) sekalian kita ini hina semuhanya. Barangkali Fakih Saghir itu menjadi raja besar akhirnya dan sekalian kita ini jadi ra'yatnya.” (forthcoming:57)
[underlining mine]

Another conventional feature which has influenced the author and shaped his narration is the system of religious values. He has written his *Surat* within an Islamic framework, especially with respect to its notions of truth and morality.

Moral Judgement: The Notion of Truth

(hakikat, lahir-batin, hitam-putih) in Islam

Even though religion has often comprised the subject matter or theme of conventional literature, particularly in *Kitab* literature, SKSJ offers a new and fresh treatment of religion in Malay literature, in its handling of the notion of truth, and its treatment of the problem of the proper way of spreading Islam. The introduction Islam into the Malay world, as depicted in some traditional Malay texts, was always a peaceful process. Generally, conversion was initiated by a Malay ruler through some magical events and encounters, and he would later be followed by his subjects. On the other hand, SKSJ gives a totally different description of the unique response of Minangkabau Malays towards Islamisation during the 19th century.

Fakih Saghir raises the notion of truth (*hakikat*) in religion as one of his reasons for writing:

"sebabnya saya mengambil pegangan ilmu hakikat" (forthcoming:31)

The notion of truth is further explored in his discussion of the terms "*putih*" (white) and "*hitam*" (black). He explains the origin of the terms, which came from a speech by Engku Besar, Tuan Khatib Betuah, who did not initially accuse any specific group:

“Adapun penghulu nan belima orang serta orang nan lima suku dalam nagari Air Terbit ini dan serta orang nan lima buah nagari yang ada dalam pelintah penghulu nan belima itu, sekarang ini ialah kami hitam nan tidak berkuran lai, putih nan tidak behata lai, putih, putih, putih, seputih2nya’ Itulah asalnya dapat nama hitam dan putih; tetapi tidak dihadapkan kepada siapa2 yang hitam dan siapa2 yang putih, hanya semata2 meibaratkan daripada fihak sangat bersungguh2 menurut hukum Tuanku saja hanya.”
(forthcoming:40)

Fagih in his *Surat Keterangan* brings a very interesting religious issue to our attention- the proper and correct way of spreading and teaching Islam. He tells us about two different ways, the moderate and the extreme, based on his own experiences. He is in favour of the moderate approach and condemns the extreme one. Fakih Saghir rejects the interpretation of the extreme group, Tuanku nan Selapan, which was led by Renceh who condemned the people of *Empat Angkat* as “*hitam*”, a judgement with which Fakih disagreed:

“Sekira2 enam tahun lama masanya dan menamai mereka itu akan orang Empat Angkat hitam jua baharu adanya. Tetapi orang Empat Angkat bukan karena tidak memakai agama pada masa itu, hanya semata2 khianat saja. Dan menamai mereka itu akan diri mereka itu putih semata2. Tidak memelihara mereka itu akan batin pekerjaan, hanya kebanyakan laku mereka itu putih sekira2 lahir saja.” (forthcoming:53)

He tries to give a more ‘objective’ and ‘balanced’ view by looking at the good and bad points of the two conflicting groups. He praises the religious teachings of “*Tuanku2 Paderi*” but criticizes their violent approach. He condemns the violent and harsh methods

adopted by the extreme group which to him and his father is only “*lahir pekerjaan*” and is not a truly Islamic method of spreading Islam (*batin pekerjaan*). His view of the correct way of teaching and spreading Islam is conveyed in his father’s advice to Tuanku nan Renceh:

“Sebab itu jadilah Tuanku nan Tuho memelintahkan parang itu, supaya jangan orang Kurai dihabiskan [orang Tilatang] Tuanku nan Renceh seperti orang Tilatang pula. Maka sebab itu tahulah Tuanku nan Renceh akan batin pekerjaan itu, jadilah ia kembali pulang serta mufakat ia mehadapkan parang ketika itu jua ke nagari orang <Lima Kota” (fortcoming:48)

Fighting as a destructive force which cruelly destroys people is totally condemned and is only allowed when religion itself is threatened (*pekerjaan agama jangan binasa*), as when his father helped Renceh on a particular occasion:

“Itupun Tuanku nan Renceh meminta tolong kepada Tuanku nan Tuho. Maka daripada karena memelihara lahir pekerjaan agama jangan binasa, jadilah Tuanku nan tuho menurunkan orang Agam semuhanya.” (fortcoming:49)

On other occasions when he and his father could not offer any physical assistance, they still gave material and moral support:

“Maka sebab sangat karas parang itu serta lama zaman sangatlah banyak lawan berkeliling; dan sangatlah picik hati Tuanku nan Renceh dan segala kaumnya, serta picik tempat, tidak boleh keluar dan tidak boleh beroleh tolong, hanya dapat tolong daripada Tuanku nan Tuho saja serta saya, Fakih Saghir, sedikit2, tetapi dangan semata2 bicara saja dan belanja alat parang saja.” (fortcoming:44)

He mentions the good aspects of “*Orang yang hitam*” - their intentions and verbal promises to convert to Islam and to be good. Nevertheless, he criticizes their barbaric and unislamic practices, which to him are ten times worse than their false promises:

“Itulah amal yang jahat sekali2, sepuluh ganda lagi jahatnya amal sekalian orang nan hitam ini” (fortcoming:59)

In his efforts to give more “objective” judgements and hence a more humane image of himself, he even admits to his own weaknesses:

“Barangkali ada mulut saya tekabur sedikit...” (fortcoming:41)

Nevertheless, most of the time he is full of self-righteousness, and professes his ignorance of the evil scheme against him, and his total submission to the Will of God:

“Fihak kepada diri saya, Fakih Saghir, tidak mengetahui saya akan daya itu, hanya semata2 mengembalikan kepada Allah ta’ala saja.....Barangkali sebab Allah ta’ala meluluskan hukumnya jua, maka melepaskan Allah ta’ala dangan tolongnya akan hambanya yang mu’min, lagi sabar, lagi pilihan, Maka sampailah Tuanku nan Tuho pulang ke nagari Koto Tuho dan saya, Fakih Saghir, jua.” (fortcoming:58)

Wasiat as Literary Device

Even more interesting are his efforts to obtain help from the Company - non-believers, to solve the problems created by the extreme group. He includes his father’s dying speech, *wasiat*, as another valid reason for his seeking help. The inclusion of *wasiat* shows that his decision was not his alone and was not made through self-interest. It also reinforces the

urgency of matter since his father was the most respected man in the community. He is therefore simply carrying out his duty as loyal and obedient son.

“Hendaklah engkau dirikan agama Allah dan agama Rasullullah dengan sebenarnya. Dan suruhkan diengkau akan segala mahanusia dengan berbuat baik. Dan tagahkan diengkau akan mereka itu dengan berbuat jahat, dan hukumkan diengkau antara segala mahanusia dengan adil, tuntutlah diengkau akan balas segala anak saya yang mati masa dahulu.” (fortcoming:60) [underlining mine]

He appeals for the Dutch Company's help in order to achieve the religious goals assigned to him by his father as stated in the *wasiat*: to spread Islam, to teach all mankind to do good; to teach them to avoid evil; to punish fairly and to take revenge for those killed. The author has thus creatively used this conventional literary device to achieve new literary goals. In addition, with statements such as “*akan segala mahanusia dengan berbuat baik*” and “*antara segala manusia dengan adil*”, Fakhir Saghir has cleverly added the universal humanitarian appeal for justice and kindness, and has not confined his actions to Islamic affair. This universal appeal provides a strong psychological and political justification for his appeal to non-believers for help. Thus, his *Surat keterangan* is interesting not only for its moral-religious significance but also for its political implications.

Fakhir Sagir's concepts of literature, authorship and notion of self can be illustrated further by analysing the structure of the text and the other literary devices employed. From this literary analysis, we may also find out the extent of his own awareness of the usage of narrative styles and techniques to achieve his personal aims in the text.

COMPOSITIONAL STRUCTURE AND THE NARRATIVE TECHNIQUE

Fakih Saghir starts off his narrative with a *Mukadimah*, which is typical of traditional Malay narratives. This is followed by a brief self-introduction. Then, he gives the abstract of the *Surat keterangan* and; his sources and reasons for writing, before commencing his narrative which begins with the origins of religious knowledge and teaching in his region, and the religious efforts of his father, himself and other leaders, which later lead to the development of the series of conflicts between them. The earlier conflicts are fully tolerated by himself and his father, who always act as peace makers. When the rival group (*Tuaniku nan Selapan*) attempts to kill him and his father, the conflict reaches new heights which are now beyond their control, and they have to turn to the Dutch for help to save their lives. After a brief self-reflection on the good and bad points of “*Tuaniku Paderi*” and “*orang yang hitam*”, he includes his father’s *wasiat* to endorse his efforts, and this is followed by an appeal for help from the Company which acts as a conclusion to his *Surat keterangan*.

The structure of the text can be simplified as follow:

- i. *Mukadimah*
- ii. Brief Self-introduction
- iii. Abstract of the text
- iv. Sources used and Objectives
- v. The story of Fakih Saghir and his father vs Tuaniku nan Selapan (the concept of “*lahir-batin*” in Islam)
- vi. Personal reflection (on the notion of “black and white”)
- vii. *Wasiat* (reinforcement of religious belief and personal act)
- viii. Conclusion - An appeal for assistance

This structure is rather different from the formal aspects of traditional Malay letters.² At the same time, it cannot be included in any known conventional genres of Malay literature (as described in Chapter 3). SKSJ is a mixture of several genres, including traditional Malay letters, hagiography and historical literature. Fakihi Saghir has introduced a new genre, a testimony, a creative innovation based on religious and fictional literature.

Appendix 2 gives a summary of the text. This is later formulated in Figure 2 which illustrates the narrative technique of the text, particularly its plot and characterisation.

Interpretations of Figure 2

Developments of Conflicts

There are about 20 conflicts described in the story and almost all are caused by "Other Character(s)". Only a few are by the writer (self) and his father (refer to C1, C3, C5 & C6) which result from their teaching of Islam. Fakihi Saghir explains the role and function of his father as a peace maker/restorer in most of the conflicts, a role in which he himself sometimes assists. Only one conflict is solved by other person as peace maker (refer to P10, but the episode is witnessed by him also S9). His father generally only uses peaceful approaches (*batin pekerjaan*) and only resorts to physical methods when really necessary (*jaga lahir pekerjaan*). He is always forgiving and always willing to work together for peace. The peak of the conflict is C20 - the attempt to kill himself and his father. The development of the series of conflicts leading to its peak, serves to prove that they are extremely tolerant leaders, and they only approach the Company as last resort, in order to

² See (Gallop, 1994) for further informations on the formal aspects of Malay letters.

save their lives. The development of the series of conflicts is actually the development of the plot of the narrative.

DEVELOPMENT OF PLOT

The narrative develops chronologically and causally consistently, though it is set in the past. It is indeed a very compact story, consisting solely of a series of events and episodes which illustrate the author's theme. However, he ends his narrative with a rather concise conclusion, compared to the pace of his early narrative. The basic theme or motive underlying the narrative is to show that he follows the right path and deserves to be helped from real danger. The help from the Company is crucial to save himself and all his people. The author has a very clear motive underlying his narration, which leads to a single-minded approach in his narrative. The plot is unfolded and developed effectively to enhance characterisation: as each event or conflict unfolds, further traits of the characters are revealed or reinforced. The author also uses dialogue and monologue/reflection techniques to enhance his characterisation and to further his aims. Thus, the author shows that he is fully aware the function of literary devices and consciously deploys such devices to achieve his goals.

Another literary device utilised is in character description or characterisation. In this literary aspect, the author's religious values and moral judgements are clearly reflected and have influenced his narrative style.

CHARACTER AND CHARACTERISATION

Generally, the author tries to project a reasonably objective attitude in his judgements (as shown in his personal reflection -refer to F). However, his narrative style shows that there are only two main character types:

good (He and his father) vs bad (others)

On the whole, there is very little character development. He describes his own intellectual and religious development, especially the origin of his religious interest, knowledge and, activities, and the responses he received from these. Only in the character of Tuanku nan Renceh, does the author use the foreshadowing technique to show that his initial great enthusiasm in spreading Islam later led to greater conflicts.

"Maka setelah itu jua mufakatliah saya dangan Tuanku nan Renceh hendak mendirikan pekerjaan itu. <Itu pun> Tuanku nan Renceh terlebih sangat berahi dan berapa2 kali mufakat, beria2 jua sambil duduk bersenang2 mehafazkan ilmu."
(forthcoming:35) [Underlining mine]

The other characters are only flat characters, which are not developed in an interesting way. For example, the character of his father, though a major one, has a fixed image which is only reinforced with subsequent illustrations.

Basically, the focus in the narration is on two main characters, the protagonists: the author himself (S) and his father (F). The author uses alternately a single-focus mode, either S or F, repeatedly (S12 and F17); or a simultaneous dual-focus mode in 7 episodes/events (F/S), in which both characters are focussed on at the same time.

The characters of others or “other characters” (O) are only used in a “counter-character” mode, and only function to highlight or enhance the images of his father and himself. The author, therefore, is more concerned about the overall image of the characters than their development, which perhaps according to him does not contribute to the attainment of his aims.

The author, however pays more attention to the projection of himself (Self). Compared to the limited exposure of Self (Lauddin) in the *Hikayat Nakhoda Muda*, we find a much greater exposure of Self in SKSJ in the person of S, either in single-focus mode (S12), or in dual-focus mode (F/S). Thus, compared to other earlier narratives, the text gives a full view and image of Self in literature.

In order to appreciate the innovations and significance of this text in the context of Malay literary development, let us compare it to the *Hikayat Nakhoda Muda*.

COMPARISON TO HIKAYAT NAKHODA MUDA

It is very interesting and important to compare SKSJ to the *Hikayat Nakhoda Muda* (HNM) which was written more than forty years earlier. The character focus of HNM is on the author’s father and we find only a glimpse of an emerging Self; this is slightly different from SKSJ which, though still giving special emphasis to the character of the author’s father, shifts the central focus onto the author himself by giving a full picture or image of himself. Thus HNM is more a biographical account and SKSJ is more autobiographical in nature.

HNM was written by Lauddin to express his pride in and support of his father's action against the *Sultan* and the Dutch. On the other hand, Fakihi Saghir wrote his letter of statement, as a form of apologia, "to defend" himself and his father for seeking assistance from the Dutch Company. HNM raises the conflict between loyalty and integrity; on the other hand, SKSJ brings up the religious conflict which questions the notion of truth and humanity in life. HNM has made an attempt to move away from the *istana*, even though there is still a strong pull towards it; SKSJ has shifted further away from the palace scene as the author's "*raja*" is now indeed *Allah*, but the royal shadow still lingers and colours certain views because the author still feels that he needs to deliver his case effectively using the conventional *istana* terms.

Is SKSJ a better piece of literature compared to HNM? This is difficult question to answer, for these are two different discourses written for different motives and purposes. Nevertheless, we can see that the author of HNM displays more literary inclination by using flowery and metaphorical expressions, as discussed in an earlier chapter. The language of SKSJ, with the exception of the *Mukadimah* of the *Surat*, is more direct and less metaphorical. There is hardly any internal evidence in the text to show that the author intended to produce a purely literary work as it was basically meant as an official statement addressed to the Colonial authority, even though he makes full attempt to convince his audience of the truth of his words. However, if Fakihi Saghir's motive is to impart the message is that he is an extremely personality in his community, fighting for the just cause based on true Islamic teachings, and his political action in seeking Dutch assistance is justified; then as an author, he is successful in achieving his aims.

Hikayat Nakhoda Muda**Surat Keterangan SJ**

Biography of the author's father

1. Autobiography, but his father is still a major character

Motive: personal-pride of his father's action against the Dutch.

2. To defend himself and his father for seeking help from the Dutch (self apologia).

Conflict between loyalty vs integrity.

3. Conflict between truth (hakikat) and humanity (moderate/extreme).

Live outside istana but still in its shadows conforming to some conventional expressions.

4. further shift, but royal shadow still lingers; there is a need to maintain court terms and expressions.

Limited view of self.

5. full view/image of self.

Conclusions

SKSJ has certain distinct features: it raises contemporary religious issues of its time, and is an autobiographical account written in form of *surat keterangan*, a testimony, which by itself is a new form of writing in Malay literature. Fakhir Saghir has changed further the concepts of literature, authorship and notions of self since the innovations of *Hikayat Nakhoda Muda* through his greater projection of self and unique form of self-expression, which is subtly and creatively manifested within an accepted cultural-religious ethos in line with the conventions of Malay society. Fakhir Saghir has followed the creative footsteps of Hamzah Fansuri in the exploration of religious themes and expressions of self; however he has entered a different religious doors and opened a different windows for self exposition.

APPENDIX 2

THE SUMMARY AND NARRATIVE TECHNIQUE OF SKSJ

- A. *Mukadimah*
- B. Self-Introduction [S1]
- C. Abstract of Surat keterangan
- D. Source and reasons for writing [F/S]
- E. The Narration: Development of Conflicts and Character Focus
 - 1. The Origin of Knowledge from Tuan Syekh Abd Kadir Jailani (Medinah) to the learned men of Aceh. [Origin]
 - 2. Fakih Saghir's close association with the learned men by personal meeting with and learning from some of them. [S2]
 - 3. His father acquires various forms of knowledge from earlier religious men. His father's influences. [F1]
 - 4. The bad behaviour of orang Agam and his father's teaching and difficulties in influencing them. [F2], [C1].
 - 5. He faces similar problems as he follows his father's footsteps in teaching. He is chosen as spokeman (*kepala bermulut*). [S3]

6. Changes for the better, and greater peace following his father's teachings. Foreigners are now protected. His father's popularity and image as a caring, protecting and model religious leader. [F3], [P1]
7. Fakih's knowledge in Fiqh, the people's recognition of him, a and brief explanation of fiqh (to show his knowledge). His interest in spreading Islam. His plan together with Tuanku nan Renceh to spread Islam. [S4]
8. On the religious efforts of Tuanku Menanti (Malin) and Renceh, and the subsequent conflict. [O1], [C2]
9. Fakih's religious efforts and the people's response/reaction to his teaching. [S5], [C3]
10. Further spread of Islam and his father as a binding factor(*tiang sendi adanya*). [F4], [P2]
11. Haji Miskin's efforts in spreading Islam at Batu Tebal and Air Terbit and the problems which result from it. His father's attempts to help him. The leaders of communities tried to stop his father from going to Air Terbit for fear that it might cause destruction. [O2], [F5], [C4].
12. Fakih stands up for his father.(He received his title after this episode which shows his courage). They went to Air Terbit and were well-received by its

people who promised to convert to Islam. Feast to celebrate the peace and conversion of the people of Air Terbit. [F/S], [P3].

13. Origin of the terms "*putih*" and "*hitam*" from the speech by Tuan Khatib Betuah. [O3]
14. Fakih is more motivated to extend his religious efforts to abolishing gambling and drinking. People are not happy, and retaliat by destroying his mosque and madrasah and other of his belongings. But he never gives up and decides to fight against them. [S6], [C5].
15. His father gathers people and uses peaceful approaches to teach Islam. [F6], [P4]
16. The people of Bukit Betabuh build a *gelanggang* for gambling. His father gathers the leaders to advise them against having the *gelanggang*, but a group of soldiers and people came to attack. Fakih suggests fighting against them for the sake of their pride. One day war occurs. [F/S], [C6]
17. Slanders against him and 4 months of war. [S7],[C7].
18. His father is still a respected leader. After 4 months, the war is over and the *gelanggang* was destroyed. [F7], [P5].

19. 10 days of War at Ladang Lawas results from religious activities by Tuanku of Padang Luar. [O4], [C8].
20. His father's assistance to Tuanku of Padang Luar. [F8]
21. Story of a trader who was robbed of his property for worshipping cocks (*memakaikan sembahyang ayam*). He approached Renceh for help and promised to turn to Islam if they would help him to get back his property. War occurred (*perang agama*) for four years. [O5], [C9].
22. Fakih and his father assist them. His father's peace efforts. [F/S], [P6]
23. Fakih's religious efforts in gathering people for *maulid* and attracting 3 groups of people of lower cultural status to Islam. [S8]
24. His father's peace efforts for the people of Mage' and Renceh. [F9], [P7].
25. Conflict between the people of Bukit Betubuh and Renceh of Kota Baharu. [O6], [C10]
26. The people of Bukit Betubuh apologise to his father. Another peace effort by his father and himself. [F/S], [P8]

27. War in Lubuk Agam involving Tuan Haji Miskin and people of Lima Puluh. [O7], [C11].
28. His father's peace efforts between the people of Lima Puluh and Haji Miskin. [F10], [P9]
29. War in Renceh's settlement resulting from his religious activities. [O8], [C12].
30. Renceh's own peace efforts witnessed by Fakih. [O9],[S9], [P10].
31. War in Titaling- cruelty and destruction caused by Renceh. Disagreement between his father and Renceh's harsh or cruel approach in spreading Islam. [O10],[F11], [C13]
32. Renceh wants to attack Kurai because of their religious ignorance. His father advises him not to repeat the similar act done in Titaling. The settlement was destroyed but not the people. [O11],[F12], [C14]
33. His father asks the people to return to their village. He converts them to Islam. [F13], [P11]
34. War at Padang Tarab initiated by Renceh. [O12], [C15]

35. His father still helps Renceh, "*karena memelihara lahir pekerjaan agama jangan binasa.*" Renceh wins the war but his father does not ask for anything in return. [F14].
36. Renceh intends to destroy the people of Lima Kota. He kills, captures, sells and made them gundik. [O13], [C16].
37. His father is very angry at his actions together with those seven other leaders (altogether 8 of them - thus the title Tuanku nan Selapan). Realizing his anger, their representative approaches Fakih to seek an apology from his father. Fakih tells his father. After some thought, his father agrees to meet them. In the meeting, they suggest to his father that he should just teach in the mosque, and let them spread Islam outside in other areas. His father scolds them and made them take an oath not to destroy and burn settlements. [F/S], [P12]
38. They go back feeling ashamed and offended. They refuse to pay for the cost of the cow slaughtered for the meeting as promised. They decide to find an alternative leader (*imam besar*), Tuanku of Mansing. They attack Gunung Paninjauan regardless of their religious leaders. They continue attacking Luhak Agam, Luhak Tanah Datar and Luhak Ranah Lima Puluh and rename their territory. [O14], [C17].

39. Fakih's opinion of the judgement/division made by the groups-*hitam* and *putih*. [S10]
40. Tuanku di Bodi representing the group seeks an apology from his father. His father agrees. The group comes to apologise and is accepted. [F15], [P13]
41. The victims of the group seek revenge on the group and spread rumours. The group feel threatened in their positions by the possible power and religious knowledge of Fakih. They decide to invite two *ulamak* (Tuanku di Batu Ladiang and Tuanku nan Saleh) to test/challenge his father's knowledge. They hope Tuanku nan Saleh, whose father had been at war with Tuanku Nan Tuho, will support their scheme. [015], [C18]
42. Tuanku nan Salleh meets his father. He clarifies (*'memafhumkan'*) his father's books and urged the people to follow his father's teaching. [F16], [P14]
43. This unexpected result causes anger and shame to the group. They decide to attack nagari Empat Angkat. They manage to destroy Empat Angkat, except nagari Koto Tuho and Bonjo Cangkiang village (Fakih's village). [016], [C19]

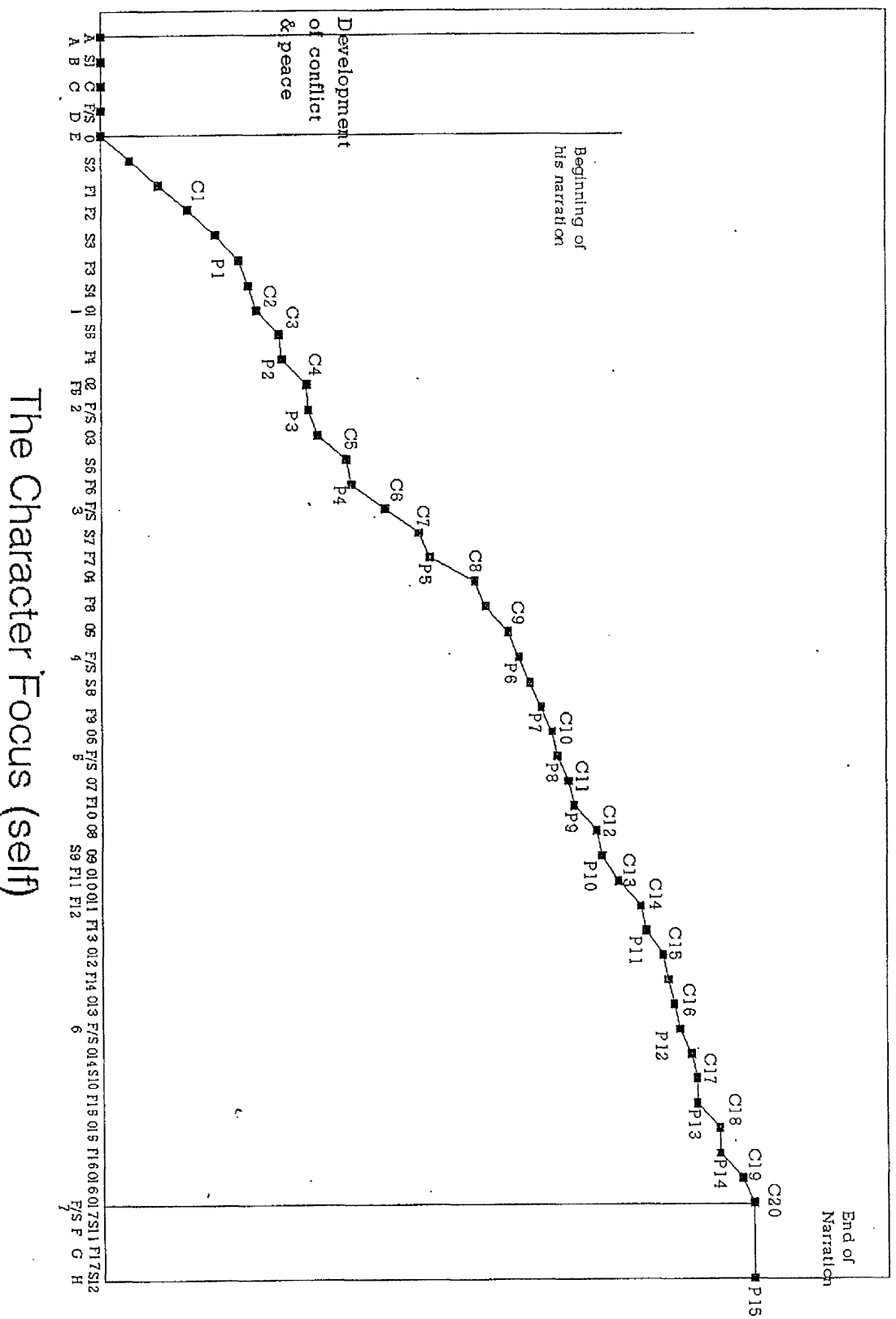
44. After four years they still can't capture his *kampung*. So they plan to kill him. They invite him and his father to explain certain religious matters (*meminta paham bepersuatukan hukum kitab Allah*). On their way there, they are attacked. He and his father manage to escape safely to their home. He has to fight seriously with them as he has no choice and the group are getting more out of control even after the arrival of the Company. [017], [F/S], [C20].

- F. His personal reflection on the good and bad points of Tuanku Paderi and 'orang yang hitam'. [S11]
- G. Wasiat of his father. [F17]
- H. Conclusion- his appeal for help from the Dutch Company. [S12], [P15]

LEGENDS:

A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H	= Parts of structure of text
S	= Self (Fakih Saghir)
F	= His Father (Tuanku nan Tuho)
F/S	= Both of them
O	= Other character(s)
C	= Conflict(s)
P	= Peace effort(s)

FIGURE 2 : The Narrative Technique of SKSJ



CHAPTER 8

HIKAYAT ABDULLAH

Introduction

In chapter one, we discussed views by several scholars of Malay and Indonesian studies on Abdullah's role in the development of Malay and Indonesian literature. This chapter attempts to analyze and reevaluate his contributions based on his most important work, the *Hikayat Abdullah* (The Story of Abdullah). The literary approaches adopted in this chapter are: focussing on the author's own concept authorship and notion of self; and a critical reading of the text itself to see how far he has manifested and applied those concepts in his own writing.

Hikayat Abdullah was written in 1843 and first published in a lithographed edition six years later, in 1849. Detailed information on its date is given by the author in the concluding part of the hikayat:

"Terkarang Hikayat Abdullah ini dalam negeri Singapura, daerah diKampung Malaka, kepada empat hari bulan Rabiulakhir tarikh hijrat sanat 1259, yaitu kepada tiga hari bulan Mei tarikh Masehi sanat 1843. Maka terchap diatas batu dalam negeri Singapura, kepada tujuh belas hari bulan Jumadulawal sanat 1265, bulan Mac tarikh Masehi sanat 1849." (Datoek Besar and Roolvink 1953:418)¹

In the *Mukadimah* (prologue), he also provides us with information on the person who had motivated him to produce the work:

¹ All quotations of the *Hikayat* in this chapter are from Datoek Besar and Roolvink's edition (1953)

"Bahwa, maka adalah kepada tatkala hijrat sanat 1256 tahun kepada lima likur hari bulan Sha'aban alMukarram, yaitu kepada dua likur hari bulan oktober tarikh Masihi sanat 1840 tahun, bahawa dewasa itu adalah seorang sahabatku, yaitu orang putih yang kukasihi akan dia, maka ialah meminta sangat2 kepadaku, yaitu hendak mengetahui akan asal usulku dan peri hikayat segala kehidupan diriku, maka ia meminta karangkan suatu kitab dalam bahasa Melayu." (Datoek Besar and Roolvink 1953:1)

The *hikayat* was written in response to a request made by his "beloved white friend" in 1840. Thus, Abdullah took about three years to complete his work. Who was his friend? Skinner (1978) and Traill (1981) believe that he was a missionary, Alfred North, who attached a document, dated at Singapore in 1843, to a copy of the *Hikayat* which he sent to the Library of Congress in Washington. The document which has been published by Skinner (1978) throws considerable light on how Abdullah was motivated and influenced by North in writing not only his autobiography, *the Hikayat Abdullah*, but also his travelogue, *Kisah Pelayaran Abdullah*.²

²

The excerpt of Alfred North's is enclosed here:

'Sometime after, I suggested to him that he might compose a work of deep interest, such as had never been thought of by any Malay, unless an exception be found in the title work mentioned in Marsden's Malay Grammar, page 214. I told him that I had never found anything in the Malay language except silly tales, useful indeed as showing how words are used, but containing nothing calculated to improve the minds of the people; and that it was a sad error into which they had fallen in supposing everyday occurrences, and all manner of things about them, too vulgar to be subjects of grave composition; nay, that unless they could be convinced of their error, they could never go forward a single step in civilization. I gave him a list of topics on which it would proper enlarge a little, in writing a memoir of himself, such as the character of his father, his opinions, treatment of children, and the like; then the circumstances of his own early education, and whatever of interest he could recollect of his whole life; with these things should be interspersed remarks on the characters of the eminent men he had taught, Raffles, Dr. Milne, Crawford, and others; on Malay superstitious, schools, domestic life; their rajas, customs, laws, and whatever Europeans would like to be informed of, which would naturally be concealed from their observation. From these general hints he has composed a work of singular interest, in beautiful Malay, and in all respects a new thing in the language. He has dwelt much on the character of one of the Malay Sultans of Singapore, and the fortunes of his family. He has taken particular pains to introduce many of the everyday phrases and idioms of the people; so that the book is also a store house for the student of the language.' (Skinner 1978:480-481)

Abdullah wrote his *Hikayat* based on a list of suggested topics provided by North. The *hikayat* chronicles important aspects of his life: his origin, birth, education, childhood, family, friends, and his teaching profession in Malacca and Singapore, his association and attachments with Europeans, his observations and reflections on local societies (Malay, Chinese, Indian etc), his writings, his health, his personal tragedies and other interesting experiences. The story of his life is narrated and developed together with accounts of the English rulers or British Colonial Powers in the Straits Settlements, particularly in Malacca and Singapore. Therefore, the *hikayat* portrays two strands of lives: his own and that of the British, which are parallel to each other, and crisscross at certain stages of his life due to his personal involvement with various of its eminent personalities (refer to figure 3).

Is Abdullah truly a pioneer of new Malay literature?

Before we can answer this question, let us look at Abdullah's own interpretation of the concept of authorship, which is crucial in helping us to formulate any conclusive opinions on him as an author, and the position of his writings in Malay literature.

The Concept of Authorship

Writing As A Craft

We may appreciate Abdullah's writing or his literary talents by analysing his concept of authorship. This concept is manifested in the *hikayat* itself.

Abdullah regards writing as a craft, with the author as a craftman (*tukang*) and language as "*perkakasnya*" (his essential tool); and to fulfill his task, an author needs to know how to use the above tools properly and effectively.

“Seperti umpama seorang ada menaruh perkakas lengkap dengan genap semuanya, tetapi tiada diketahuinya apa2 gunanya dan bagaimana memakai dia. Maka bolehkah ia menjadi tukang? Maka kalau dengan keras ia menjadi tukang juga, dapat tiada perkakasan itupun rusak dan benda yang hendak dibuatnya itupun binasalah. Maka lama-kelamaannya segala perkakasnya itu habis dimakan oleh karat. Demikianlah keadaannya ilmu mengarang itupun. Maka jikalau barang suatu perkataan itu dipakaikan berpatutan dengan tempatnya, nischaya sedaplah bunyinya dan setujulah dengan artinya. Maka jikalau dengan bukan2 tempatnya dipakaikan dia changgunglah ia, seperti antan dichungkilkan duri adanya.” (1953:122)

AUTHORIAL ROLE AND FUNCTIONS

Even though several times Abdullah describes himself as *“seorang bodoh”* (a stupid person), he actually believes that an author is not an ordinary person (*“bukan siengkau, siaku”*, 1953:121) but a knowledgeable man (*“orang yang pandai”*, 1953:121) from whose wisdom we need to learn (*“maka sebab itu kita ambil kepandaian ilmunya itu”*, 1953:121).

Abdullah explains that writing is a serious and heavy task for the author (*“menjadi masghullah aku serta beratlah rasanya anggotaku duduk berpikiran”*, 1953:1), and it requires special moral qualities, knowledge of language and writing skills (*“budi, paham ilmubahasa dan ilmu mengarang”*, 1953:1).

According to Abdullah, an author needs to learn from the old literary works or Malay *hikayats* to develop writing skills and language competence, especially in the use of language and expressions. Even though, he condemns the contents of the *hikayat* as

"bohong" ("lies", or simply fiction), he believes that these old hikayats are still valuable (*ambil patinya, bukan hampasnya*) and can be a good source of inspiration or models for more realistic and beneficial writings:

"boleh engkau mendapat modal akan mengarang kitab2 yang betul dan benar dan yang berfaedah kelak akhirnya." (1953:376)

Abdullah has clear objectives in writing. Writing, to him, is a special task which brings about "*kebajikan*" (welfare) and "*selamat sejahtera*" (peace and prosperity) to the two parties: the author and his reader or audience:

"Maka bahawasanya kumeteraikanlah hikayatku ini dengan chap kebajikan dan selamat sejahtera atas kedua pihak, yaitu bagi orang yang mengarangkan dia dan bagi orang yang membacha atau mendengar akan dia" (1953:417)

"Disampaikan Allah kiranya seperti yang kukehendaki itu, sejuk dingin selamat sentosa sejahtera kedua pihaknya. Amin."
(1953:418)

He explains that there are four functions of writing: firstly, for the young generation to learn about events of the past; secondly, for them to learn and follow the good examples and great personalities; thirdly, for them to shun the evils of the world as told in the work; and finally, as a guidance for those who are interested to learn Malay language (see pp.417-418). Thus, Abdullah recognizes the importance of writing as a source of historical knowledge, moral guidance and language teaching and learning.

How does writing contribute to an author's welfare, peace and prosperity? In his *hikayat*, Abdullah gives several episodes to illustrate the personal functions of literature. The first two refer to his personal tragedies. His suffering from the death of his beloved daughter, Siti Lela, and the loss of his personal belongings in the great fire of Singapore, moved him to write *Dawa-ulkulub* and *Syair Singapura Terbakar*, not only as a catharsis for his own emotional pains, but also for the benefit of others who suffer from similar predicaments:

"Maka kuhiburkanlah hatiku dengan duduk mengarangkan syair itu." (1953:321)

"...supaya menghilangkan perchintaan sampai rasa tiada mau makan dan tidur, maka dari pada masa itu kuusahakanlah diriku mengarangkan suatu kitab yang ringkas, maka kunamai akan dia dengan bahasa Arab Dawa-ulkulub, artinya dalam bahasa Melayu: Obat hati. Maka adalah kurenchanakan dalam kitab itu dari hal peri kemuliaannya kepada ibu bapa yang mati anaknya sebelum balig dan peri nikmat yang diperoleh ibubapa kepada hari kiamat yang ada mati kechil2 itu dan peri hal bagaimana besar dosanya bagi ibubapa yang menaruh perchintaan dan dukachita dan meratap dengan berbiji2 sabuk itu dan yang ada pula berlaku dengan berbagai2 kelakuan yang ditegah oleh sjar dan sebagainya.

Kalakian, setelah sudahlah kitab itu kukarangkan, maka kubachakanlah akan dia kepada isteriku. Maka dengan tolong Allah baharulah ia sukachita serta melupakannyalah akan perchintaan anaknya itu. Maka adalah kitab itu sampai sekarang ini menjadi

pinjaman bagi segala orang yang kematian anak dan beberapa pula orang yang telah menyalin akan kitab yang tersebut itu adanya.” (1953:386-387)

“Adapun kasadku supaya kelak diketahui oleh segala orang yang kemudian daripadaku akan segala hal-ihwal aku telah merasai beberapa pahit dalam lazat dunia ini dan telah kena beberapa ribut dan ombak yang besar2 dalam pelayaran kehidupan dunia ini dan telah melihat beberapa ajaib dalam negeri Singapura.” (1953:321-2)

His perception of the functions of literature for personal gain is also reflected in an episode which described his reaction to the *Fame*, Raffles’s tragic ship which was destroyed by fire:

“Maka apabila aku menengar khabar yang demikian itu, terbanglah arwahku sebab terkenangkan sekalian kitab2 bahasa Melayu dan lain2 daripada beberapa zaman punya, dipungutnya dari pada segenap negeri sekaliannya habislah hilang, tiada lagi tinggal benihnya karena sekaliannya itu tulisan tangan. Jikalau kitab dichap, adalah benihnya dan lagi seperti segala perkakas yang heran2 itu sekalian. Adapun seperti harta bendanya itu tiadalah aku susahkan, dan lagi pula terkenangkan aku seperti perjanjiannya hendak membuat kitab dari hal negeri2 yang disebelah sini serta janjinya hendak memasukkan namaku dalam kitab2 itu, semuanyaapun sudahlah hilang; makin aku kenangkan dari hal perkara itu sekalian, makinlah susah hatiku sebab suatu kerugian besar pula kepada orang2 Eropahpun, oleh kehendak tuan Raffles itu hendak mengarangkan beberapa hikayat, yaitu suatu hikayat dari hal tanah Bugis dan suatu dari hal pulau Berunai dan suatu hikayat dari hal pulau Singapura, dan lagi pula beberapa perkara yang indah2

hendak diperbuatnya, maka sekalian kitab2 itu serta salinannya dalam bahasa Inggeris itu semuanya sudahlah hilang.” (1953:252-253)

Abdullah regards the incident as a great loss to society and to him personally as the opportunity for his name to be written, and thus recognized and popularized by Raffles, vanished with the **Fame**. His statement above is very revealing with regard to his expectations of literature or of writing for personal gain or interests.

Abdullah wants to project himself as a writer and he also explains his process of writing. Besides personal experiences, observations, and direct involvement as first hand sources for his writing, he does some research and investigation to ascertain the validity of his information, for he does not rely on hearsay which to him is usually full of “lies and irrational”. In the Hikayat, we are told that he went all out to find “truthful” information: he travelled for two miles and had to spend some money to find out about the secret behind the capture of elephants; he eagerly eavesdropped on the conversation between Raffles and Panglima Besar; he interviewed the Jakun tribe; he personally interviewed the Indian soldiers in Malacca and the person involved in the rumours about the English church in Singapore; he postponed his trip home and stayed some time in Singapore to witness the consequences of the fire in Singapore; and he even risked his own life by going and pretending to act as a beggar to see the hiding place of the Thian Tai Huey Society - all simply because he was curious to know and wanted to write about these things.

THE AUTHOR'S CREATIVE PROCESS

Abdullah wants to project a positive image of himself as an author who is inquisitive, observant, critical and reliable or truthful in his words. At least, this is an ideal image of an author for which he aims for himself. In studies by Hill (1965), Talib (1990) and Gallop (1994), the historical validity or merit of his words is severely and continuously challenged;³ and yet we still get an interesting account of the writer at work:

"Maka aku bawa duit satu rupia dan sebilah pisau kechil dan sebatang pensil dan sekeping kertas, lalu berjalanlah kami.." (1953:271)

"Maka sekalian hal itu barang yang kulihat aku tuliskan..." (1953:277)

"Shahadan, apabila kulihat hal yang demikian itu maka tiadalah terkata2 aku rasanya, hampirlah terduduk ditengah jalan itu, sebab sangatlah lemahnya tubuhku karena penyakit itu, istimewa pula terkejut itu. Maka pada ketika itu aku rabalah dalam saku bajuku, maka aku dapat sebiji biscuit dan sebatang pensil. Maka biscuit itulah kumakan karena beberapa hari aku tiada makan sebab demam itu. Maka berlarilah aku ketengah simpang itu, maka kudapatlah kertas china membungkus daun teh, maka kuambillah kertas itu kupegang. Maka itulah bekalku berjalan kesana kemari. Dengan tolong Allah demam dan penyakitku itupun hilanglah. Adapun obatnya itulah terkejut, dengan tiada suatu obat yang lain. Adapun barang yang kulihat dan yang kudengar dan yang kudapati dan yang kurasai dalam huruhara api itu sekaliannya kutuliskan dalam kertas itu." (1953:320-321)

"....Maka dalam yang demikian duduklah aku lagi dalam Singapura sebab hendak

³ Hill notices "his frequent blunders of facts, his occasional deliberate distortion of the truth and his often hopelessly confused chronology" (1985:27). Talib (1990) debunks his claims about the sufi who predicted his birth and his religious teacher. Gallop(1994) gives a different picture of Tengku Panglima Besar based on letters related to him.

melihatkan bagaimana kelak kesudahannya rumah2 terbakar itu supaya kutuliskan dalam syairku itu.” (1953:322)

“Maka sekonyong2 kuchingpun melompatlah, lalu aku terkejut daripada tidurku. Maka ayampun berkokok, hampirlah siang.” (1953:228)

God as Anchorage In the Creative Process

Abdullah, being a Muslim, believes in the supreme power and the Will of God. Despite his close association with Christian missionaries, his belief in Islam remained untarnished and shaped his concept of authorship, and this is manifested throughout his *Hikayat*. His strong religious conviction is clearly shown in this episode:

“Melainkan masing2 melarangkan aku, katanya: ‘Jangan baca kitab ini, buangkan. Karena ini kitab orang putih. Nanti rusak iman kita.’ Maka jawabku kepada mereka itu: ‘Bagaimana engkau boleh tau ini kitab orang putih? Bukankah ini bahasa Melayu? Apakah artinya iman itu? Adapun artinya iman itu yang kuketahui, percaya. Maka jikalau kiranya aku membaca seribu kitab agama lain2, jikalau tiada percaya aku akan dia, bolehkah rusak iman? Aku tiada mahu menengar perkataan bodoh itu.’” (1953:123)

Abdullah believes that the power of God is very important in the field of writing. He realizes his weakness and limitations as a human, and therefore refers to God for guidance and strength in his process of writing:

“...jikalau kurang pahammu, pohonkanlah kepada Tuhan yang telah berjanji barang siapa yang meminta ia akan mendapat. Maka jikalau kiranya demikianlah

kemurahanNya Tuhan, insya Allah ta'ala, aku meminta tolong juga dengan sebolehnya kepadaNya. yang telah membentangkan langit yang sebesar itu dengan tiada bertongkat, supaya dipenuhiNya akan kehendak kekasihku itu. Maka jikalau aku ini bukannya ahli bagi yang demikian sekalipun, bahwa haraplah juga aku kepadanya, akan menyertai aku atas pekerjaan yang sedikit ini adanya.” (1953:3)

“...karena aku ini seorang yang bodoh lagi tiada mempunyai ilmu dan kepandaian dan kuasa, melainkan kepada Allah juga aku bergantung serta meminta tolong, karena semata-mata kehendakku mengarang hikayat, supaya menjadi kebajikan atas beberapa perkara.” (1953:417)

In writing the *Dawa-ulkulub*, Abdullah had to refer to religious books for his materials and since he felt that he was not an expert in the area, he expresses high hopes for God's help in writing the book:

“Kalakian, maka kuperkenankanlah kehendaknya itu serta kumulailah diriku berjinak-jinak dengan segala kitab2 yang tersebut namanya dalam risalatku itu. Maka jikalau kiranya aku ini bukan ahli bagi yang demikian sekalipun, karena berpeganglah aku serta dengan sebesar-besar harapku kepada Allah, supaya menyertai akan daku dalam pekerjaan yang sedikit itu...” (1953:386)

With such views, Abdullah has given us a theoretical conception of writing which had not been attempted by earlier authors. He has added additional dimensions to the theoretical concept of authorship in the Malay literature, which was explored earlier by Hamzah Fansuri. The self (ego) as a focus of his writing, was emphasized by Hamzah

Fansuri and to a lesser degree by Lauddin and Fakhir Saghir, but had never previously been directly and explicitly expressed as in Abdullah's *hikayat*; especially if we compare to other contemporary authors who normally perceived writing as a social act rather than a personal one. Abdullah, throughout his *Hikayat*, has consistently emphasized the important role of an author as a teacher of the Malay language. He is highly didactic and spirited in dealing with the issue of the Malay language, which becomes one of the main themes of his *Hikayat*.

Notion of Self

Self-and-court-centrism

Abdullah's focus on self is reflected clearly by the themes of his narrative. By choosing his own life as the subject matter or theme and himself as the protagonist of his writing, Abdullah has moved one step further than Lauddin, Ahmad Rijaludin, Fakhir Sagir and even Raja Ahmad and Raja Ali Haji.⁴

The court is the main literary setting for conventional narratives. Abdullah has not departed totally from this setting even though he has changed its protagonist. There are at least three chapters devoted to events directly related to Malay kings or royalty (the chapters on Tengku Long and Sultan Hussein Shah of Singapore and Tengku Temenggong Seri Maharaja of Johor). In addition, there are other chapters which refer indirectly to the court circle. Besides his own personal affairs, Abdullah also focuses on the British rulers, whom some of them are regarded by him as "raja"; for example, Colonel Farquhar (*Tuan*

⁴ The distinct theme of his work is firstly recognised by Datoek Besar and Rolvink (1953). They note that his *hikayat* does not contain any Malay characteristics ("*tidak bersifat Melayu*") as it was not a Malay custom to write about one's own life ("*bukan adat akan menulis riwayat hidup sendiri*") (1953:viii).

Raja Farquhar) and Governor Butterworth. Therefore, even though the Malay istana is not the centre of his writing, he has shifted the focus to an English or European court. What interesting about his Hikayat is that Abdullah, following Lauddin, has integrated the two elements (self and court), making self-and-court-centrism the focus of his writing. However, there is a difference in their treatment of self. Lauddin, has focussed on the self of the protagonist of the narrative, his father, the Nakhoda Muda, with less emphasis on his own ego as the author of the text. On the other hand, Abdullah has written mainly about his own self (authorial self) which becomes the centre and core theme of his autobiography.

This rather long accounts of his life of 429 pages consists of a brief prologue (*Mukadimah*), 28 chapters and a concluding epilogue on self-reflection. Each chapter focuses on a certain central theme and/or with other minor themes. With the exception of a few historical objects and events such as forts, schools, chapels, churches, and war; historical figures normally become the central subject matter of each chapter. These choices of subject matter or events are organised chronologically and are chosen and highlighted by the author to illustrate and enhance the image of either one of the two strands of life outlined above.

Following traditional scribes who wrote to glorify the power of their king and his kingdom, Abdullah also wants to show off the supreme and multi-dimensional powers of British rulers and their kingdom, not only in the spheres of politics and the military, but also in the fields of knowledge and technology. He illustrates how the mighty power and strength of British Colonialism vanquishes Malacca, Singapore, Java, Siam (through Raffles' superior knowledge in replying to the letter of the king of Siam) and even big

countries such as China. The *Hikayat* conveys a moral thesis that the ascent and decline of political powers is correlated to the moral attributes of the rulers. This didactic motive or function is not new as it is often expounded in other traditional texts, especially in historical narratives or historiography.

THE COMPOSITIONAL STRUCTURE

However, we find one significant difference in Abdullah's treatment of the subject matter. The exposition and illustration of the two opposing powers are done simultaneously, and his moral judgements are shown rather explicitly. Thus, compared to conventional narratives which have a normal curve for their development of powers, this hikayat has a different structural pattern (please refer to figure 4).

A close reading of the narrative shows that each chapter is written with a strong value judgement of good and bad. He makes clear moral distinctions between good and bad, and categorises all his subjects, either positively or negatively, and this line of judgement is consistent throughout the whole narrative, from the prologue to the epilogue. Using his binary opposition of values, we can derive and plot a uniform pattern for the structural organisation or formal development of the narrative:

THE BINARY OPPOSITION TECHNIQUE

Chapter	Thematic Value
x.	Mukaddimah: the ignorant self and the Mighty God
1.	The humble self and the highly respected origin
3.	The special birth and the ailing custom
4.	The suffering soul and the indifferent hearts

5. The great mind and the superstitious eyes
6. The great ruler and the ignorant people
7. The harmonious model and the disordered phenomena
8. Rulership: between kindness and arrogance
9. Leadership: truth and falsehood
10. Appreciation of knowledge and negative attitudes in learning
11. The ecstasy of the majority and the personal agony
12. New Light in the dark Island.
13. Heavy rain and a long drought
14. Leadership: Efficiency and stupidity
15. Peace and Order or disintegration of dignity
16. Wise action and barbaric practice
17. Rulership: Blindness and Wisdom
18. Prosperity of the country and personal insufficiency
19. Great personal gains and losses
20. Rulership: national appreciation and indifference
21. Between trust and scepticism or knowledge and ignorance
22. Between curiosity and safety or loyalty and integrity
23. The ascending and declining Powers
24. Two social circles: the learned and the fools
25. The failed rebellion and the powerful victory
26. Worm and Serpent: Cruelty and Fair Punishment
27. Personal tragedies: between the crying heart and the calm mind
28. Consolidation of Supremacy and the injured humiliation

Significance of the Binary Opposition Technique

Our detailed analysis of its compositional structure shows that Abdullah is fairly consistent in the development of his story, characterisation and illustrations. This is different from observations made by Hill and Johns about the *Hikayat*. Hill (1969) states that “*although Abdullah describes the events in roughly chronological sequence, his narrative lacks formal*

development as he discusses unconnected topics in no logical order, returning again and again to his favourite theme of debt-slavery and the difficulty of the Malay language". On the other hand, Johns comments that his hikayat "... does not have the sweep of a literary work or the analysis of personalities in conflict and development that one would like to expect. Formally, it is more an arrangement of notes and jottings than an integrated piece of work" (Hill 1975:39).

This consistency is manifested in the binary oppositional technique employed (see Figure 4). However, this technique at the same time mirrors the way that Abdullah perceives and pictures the world in two simplistic categories: bad and evil vs good and kind. Johns has described Abdullah as having a clear sense of the creative power of God and the moral responsibility of man, for he belongs to a clear line of Muslim tradition (Johns 1975:39). Nevertheless, his moral criticisms and categorisation, appear simplistic, harsh and one-sided.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND SELF AS A GOOD EXAMPLE OF LIFE

Compared to the other authors, Abdullah's account of his life is more detailed and rather intimate. His *Hikayat* describes fully and intensely his views, feelings, experiences, observations and reflections on his past, present and future hopes. The writings of Hamzah, Lauddin and Fakhir Sagor contain autobiographical elements because of their focus on the self, but each one touches a different domain of self. With Abdullah's *Hikayat*, autobiographical writing becomes a complete discourse or genre in Malay literature.

Abdullah gives a different notion of self. He wrote his *Hikayat* with the clear purpose of giving his own life experiences as a good example for others to learn from and to follow. This is explicitly expressed in his elaboration of the authorial role and functions above. He displays a remarkable degree of self-confidence and pride in the achievements he has accomplished in his life, as an enlightened man in an ignorant society, a responsible and loving husband and father, a knowledgeable and dedicated teacher, a loyal citizen, a socially concerned person and a highly motivated and spirited writer. In almost all aspects of his life, Abdullah paints a very positive image of himself, for others to admire and imitate. His self-glorification is done intentionally to show his life in an exemplary light.

Abdullah has indeed expressed a few important views and had made some changes to Malay literature as shown above in his theoretical discourse on authorial role and functions, compositional structure and notion of self as expressed in his *hikayat*. However such changes are made within the framework of conventions. His *hikayat* illustrates clearly that Abdullah still conforms to the conventional system of values and styles of expression.

COUNTER - OPPOSED CHARACTERS

It is also important to analyse Abdullah's characterisation to find out more about his style of writing. In conventional narratives, the literary norm was to give positive characterisations of kings and protagonists of royal background. A traditional court author was not allowed to write explicitly something bad about his king which would tarnish his royal image. Abdullah continues this conventional function, and only shifts his patron from the Malay kings to the British rulers. He gives positive images to his British rulers and portrays negatively most of the Malay rulers described in his *hikayat*.

On the physical attributes and character of Sultan Hussein Shah:

"Bermula, adapun pada zaman tatkala ia datang dari Riau ke Singapura itu, maka tubuhnya itu tiadalah gemuk melainkan sepemakai adanya, maka apabila ia telah menjadi Sultan di Singapura, maka tubuhnya itu semakin hari makin tambun. Adapun tambunnya itu sampai terlampaulah daripada adat sehingga kelihatan empat persegi serta dengan pendeknya menjadi tiada berketahuan rupa, lagi kepalanya kecil dan lehernya tenggelam, oleh sebab sangat tambunnya kelihatan tiada berleher dan mukanya lebar dan matanya juling dan hidungnya sederhana dan mulutnya luas dan dadanya bidang. Maka perutnya gendut berlipat2, maka pahanya bertemu kedua belahnya dan betisnya seladang, tiada berperut dan kakinya lebar dan suaranya garau lagi hebat bunyinya. Maka tabiatnya itu barang dimana ia duduk, ia mendengkur tidur, maka apabila ia berkata2 itu suaranya didengar oleh orang, yang belum biasa menengar, menjadi ketakutan sebab menengking2 bunyinya. Maka warna tubuhnya putih kuning adanya. Maka tiadalah aku lanjutkan perkataan ini, karena banyaklah orang yang telah mendapat hajatnya dan melihat sifat dan kelakuannya, akan tetapi seumur hidupku ini belumlah aku bertemu dengan orang yang setambun itu, sehingga tiadalah lagi kuasa ia membawa dirinya. Maka adalah pada perasaanku adapun tambun yang demikian itu bahwa sekali2 tiadalah mendatangkan sehat dan kesenangan pada badan, melainkan dalam segala perkara mendatangkan kesusahan juga adanya." (1953:289-290)

He ruthlessly criticizes Sultan Hussein for turning down the offer made by Raffles to send his son together with the sons of the Tumenggong and Ministers to Benggala to study:

"Bahwa sesungguhnya adalah pada pikiranku maka nyatalah kebodohan dan kekurangannya pikiran Sultan itu....Maka itupun tidak inilah menjadi masygul sangat

hatiku melihatkan hal manusia ini, hidup diduniapun tidak, akhiratpun tidak, duduk dengan mengeraskan hawa nafsu sendirinya sahaja, seperti kata Arab: jahil murakkab, artinya jahil bersusun dua kali, bodoh sekali, bodoh tiada tahu, dua kali bodoh, orang memberitahupun, ia tiada mau turut...” (1953:228)

This is in marked contrast to his descriptions of British rulers, such as Colonel Farquhar (see pages 67-68, 254) and Governor Butterworth (see pages 403-4). Even though, he illustrates a few events which criticize the ‘bad’ actions of Englishmen, he does so indirectly or subtly and this is rather imbalanced and biased compared to his harsh and direct criticisms of the Malay leaders and local people. For example, his comments on the destruction of the fort:

“Adapun seri negeri Melaka itulah kota itu. Maka apabila sudah pecah kota itu, maka negeri Melaka pun tiada berseri lagi, umpama seorang perempuan yang kematian suaminya, tiadalah berseri mukanya.” (1953:55)

His criticism of how Raffles won over Tengku Long’s heart is also very subtle:

“Lalu bercakaplah tuan Raffles pada masa itu dengan tersenyum-senyum simpul serta muka manis dengan menunduk-nundukkan kepalanya. Manisnya seperti laut madu. Maka pada masa itu jangankan hati manusia, jikalau batu sekalipun pecah-pecahlah oleh sebab mendengarkan perkataannya itu serta dengan lemah lembut suaranya, seperti bunyi-bunyan yang amat merdu akan menghilangkan percintaan dan syak yang ada tersembunyi dalam perbendaharaan hati manusia itupun lenyaplah. Maka segala ombak waswas yang berpalu-paluan yang di atas karang wasangka itupun teduhlah. Maka pokok angin yang amat kencang serta dengan gelap gulita itu pun seperti ribut yang besar akan turun, bahwa

sekaliannya hilanglah sehingga teranglah cuaca. Maka bertiuplah angin yang lemah lembut, yang terbit dari dalam taman mahabat. Maka sekonyong-konyong terbitlah bulan purnama empat belas hari bulan, gilang gemilang cahaya sehinggalah tulus ikhlas tuan Raffles akan Tengku Long itu.” (1953:193)

He also comments on Raffles’s cunning way of persuading the Temenggung to move out of his village:

“Maka sekaliannya itu adalah seperti perkataan Melayu: mulut disuap pisang dan pantat dikait onak. Maka bahawa sesungguhnya dalam hati tuan Raffles terlalu banyak fikiran hendak dihalaunya nyata-nyata, nescaya kelihatanlah jahatnya kepada Temenggung. Maka oleh sebab kepandaiannya dan akal nya itu dimatapun tiada kena, dikenangnya pun tiada kena, ia melepaskan dirinya itu dengan perihal sahaja, akan tetapi Temenggung tiada sadar akan hal itu adanya.” (1953:222)

He also describes the selfish reaction of Crawford to the agreement made by the Sultan to hand over S’pore:

“Maka apabila didengar oleh tuan Crawford yang demikian itu , sukacitalah ia sebab barang yang dikehendaknya itu telah didapatinya, dan lagi supaya terpujilah namanya kepada kompeni oleh sebab kebaktiannya itu.” (1953:291)

Traditional Malay authors usually have a clear-cut sense of moral judgement and moral categorisation (either good or bad character types) which determine the denouement to any moral conflict in their narratives. However, court authors usually resorted to indirect or subtle ways of criticising the cruelty or injustice of their own rulers because their task

was mainly to serve the interests of their literary patron, the ruler. From this perspective, Abdullah only continues the conventional role and functions of Malay scribes with respect to their patron: to serve their *raja* with full dedication and a sense of loyalty, and should they need to criticize him, it should be done subtly without tarnishing the ruler's overall image and *daulat*. This is different from Kassim Ahmad's view:

"Tetapi dengan munculnya Abdullah lahirlah suatu konsep baru. Konsep ini merombak anggapan-anggapan tradisional terhadap peranan seorang pengarang, terhadap peranan kesusasteraan dan juga terhadap nilai seorang individu dalam masyarakat. Seorang pengarang bukan lagi seorang tukang tulis yang mengubah untuk keperluan dan kesenangan tuannya, melainkan seorang manusia yang berperibadi sendiri 'dengan pendapatnya dan pendiriannya sendiri yang dapat, malah harus, dikeluarkan dalam karangan-karangannya'." (Kassim Ahmad 1981:xiv)

Abdullah not only continues to maintain these traditional functions but also the style of traditional literature, for he has also consciously used certain conventional elements of the literature for the benefit of his personal aims. For example, he has included superstitious and mythical elements to create certain narrative effects in certain events or episodes described and also to enhance his self image and the image of other favourable personalities for the benefit of his audience. This is contrary to some observations made about him. Kassim Ahmad (1960) states that Abdullah changed the Malay literature from "*dongeng*", "*khayal*" and "*feudal*". According to Johns,

"Abdullah's understanding of religion is enlightened and untarnished by superstition" (Johns 1975).

SUPERSTITIOUS/MYTHICAL ELEMENTS

There are a few events in the *hikayat* which indicate strongly Abdullah's inclination for superstitious and mythical thinking. The first episode is on his own 'miracle' birth. He seems to imply that his birth is rather extraordinary, as it was predicted by a saint, an Arab Sayid, Habib Abdullah of the Haddad Family, and that he was named after this great sufi.

"Maka kata tuan itu: Baiklah pergi engkau katakan kepada isterimu, janganlah ia menangis, insya Allah nanti diberi Allah kepadanya seorang anak laki2. Maka apabila beranak kelak engkau namakan dengan namaku." (1953:12)

Abdullah actually wanted to relate or associate his birth with the coming and the birth of British power in Malacca:

"Kepada tarikh sanat 1211 tahun, kepada tujuh hari bulan Safar, hari Ahad siang hari, ketika shamsu, yaitu lepas daripada delapan bulan Inggeris mengambil Malaka dari tangan Belanda" (1953:11)

His "miraculous" birth, after the earlier consecutive deaths of all his four brothers, and his amazing survival after suffering from several serious illnesses and having to be breastfed by about 15 or 16 women, bring back to our minds the episodes of the extraordinary births of the heroes of traditional narratives, which were normally predicted by "*ahlum nujum*" (astrologer) and which caused unusual changes to their environment.⁵

⁵

In a recent study on Abdullah, Talib (1990) has shown us that Abdullah's claim about the Hadrami saint and sufistic master is baseless, as there are no records of his setting foot in Malacca or other parts of the Malay world. He died in Hadramawt in 1132/1719, some seventy years before Abdullah was born. Abdullah's claim to have learned from Saiyyid Shaikh bin Alwi of the Ba Fakihi race was also rejected by Talib, for Abdullah was born earlier than Saiyyid Shaikh and it was not possible for the latter to be his religious teacher after 11th year (circa 1907). Talib thus concludes that Abdullah must have wanted "to surround the events leading to his birth and his educational background with an aura of distinction" (1990:)

Another rather strange phenomenon described and to which Abdullah attached mystical connotations is the episode of the founding of Singapore:

“Maka seketika lagi datanglah Tengku Long dan Tengku Tumenggong dan Raja Ambung, serta orang2 Melayu itupun ramailah mengiring dia dengan berpayung kuning, lalu berjalanlah. Adapun ketika berjalan itu, maka kuasa Allah maka turunlah hujan panas. Maka dalam petua Melayu konon alamat kebajikan juga kesudahannya.” (1953:194)

Abdullah also narrates how Farquhar twice escaped death : firstly, he was shot, and secondly, he was attacked by a tiger. Because of these incidents, Farquhar was regarded by his subjects as “*orang bertuah*” (lucky man) and they also believed that he was predestined to be a famous ruler:

“Sungguhlah raja kita ini orang bertuah adanya. Maka dua kali sudah mati hidup pula kembali, tentulah ia nanti menjadi lagi besar.” (1953:67).

Normally, Abdullah was quick to condemn any superstitious belief and attitudes and to regard such attributes as “irrational” (*tidak berakal*) and “*penipu yang besar*” (great deception):

“Maka dahulu akupun perchaya akan sekalian itu serta takut. Sebab dari pada kechilku telah menengar akan perkara itu serta orang2 membuat takut. Datangnya sekalian itu dari pada orang tua2. Akan tetapi semenjak aku telah mendapat pelajaran dan akal sedikit2, serta membacha kitab2, tambahan pula telah berchampur2 dengan orang yang berakal, yaitu orang putih, maka bahawasanya kuketahuilah sekalian itu bohong lagipun penipu yang besar adanya.” (1953:138)

Abdullah is rather blunt and rather sarcastic about superstitious people:

"Sebermula bahwa dengarlah oleh tuan2 aku mencheritakan hal kebodohan pikiran manusia, yaitu orang Melayu dan Keling dan China dalam negeri Singapura dan Malaka".
(1953:380)

"Maka adapun segala orang yang tiada perchaya boleh dipechahkan kota Melaka itupun, terkutuplah mulutnya, tiadalah terkata-kata lagi. Maka segala hantu syaitan yang dalam otak orang itupun, habislah semuanya terbang kembali kepada asalnya, sebab takutkan asap obat bedil itu adanya." (1953:57)

Despite such strong condemnation, it is ironical that in the above events, he seems to accept or approve of their beliefs; probably because they supported his real intention of painting Farquhar as an ideal 'special' king.

In another episode he describes the British soldiers in Malacca who were regarded with awe and wonder by people of the country for their mighty strength and skills:

"Maka seorang itu berkata: 'Ini bukannya manusia'. Maka kata seorang yang lain: 'Inggeris ini betul Jin, maka sebab itu dapat diperbuatnya pekerjaan yang demikian." (1953:93)

In describing those episodes without his usual sharp criticisms, Abdullah is in fact 'mystifying' the power of the British rulers, soldiers and thus the British empire, a literary device copied from traditional narratives. Nevertheless, this mystifying element creates new doubts and challenges the claims made about him as a rational and intellectual writer. He

condemns categorically the superstitious attitudes of people of all races, but at the same time he shows similar inclinations towards such phenomena, even though this is expressed rather subtly and selectively. Why? Was he very influenced by conventional descriptions of such events (the birth of hero and the origin of a kingdom) to which had to be attached a sense of extra-ordinariness?

We may interpret this as follows: Abdullah purposely included such elements to illustrate or reinforce the attributes of 'greatness' or 'specialness' with regard to himself and his raja; this of course indirectly tarnishes the image of the 'rational' or logical person that he explicitly and deliberately wanted to project for himself, and which has to date been proposed by others. Perhaps we need a literary explanation for this. Abdullah, in these episodes, merely behaved like a true author, whose main aim is to attract his intended audience, who are still superstitious or conventional in their way of thinking and literary tastes. Thus he resorts to such literary devices or writing strategies in order to convince and impress them, and finally to achieve his own objectives in writing the *Hikayat*.

There are other conventional elements in the *hikayat* which appear to have been consciously included by Abdullah to achieve his aims. In the *Mukadimah* he writes:

"...yang mendatangkan dukacita dalam hatiku sebab bahwa sesungguhnya aku ini seorang bodoh lagi dengan kurang budiku dan pahamku dalam ilmu bahasa, maka bertambah-tambah pula picik pengetahuanku dalam ilmu mengarang adanya" (1953:1)

Even though he attempts to express humility, this is obviously merely to conform to the conventions of prologues in Malay narratives. In fact, his other explicit descriptions

of his own stupidity and lack of enterprising spirit, are incongruous compared to the general tone of his writing, in which he continuously implicitly associates himself with a higher, moral category of persons. Sweeney observes that humility is not one of Abdullah's qualities and his *Mukadimah* would have a jarring effect on Malay readers (Sweeney 1980:17). Nevertheless, the narrative has changed the concept of 'one-downmanship' described by Muhammad Haji Salleh (1991). Though it may not have been his deliberate intention, Abdullah has changed the emphasis of Malay authorship from seeming self-deprecations to overt self-glorification.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE CONCEPT OF LOYALTY

Even Abdullah's treatment of the conventional theme of loyalty does not depart from its traditional meaning and perspective. Abdullah's concept of loyalty may be seen in the context of his professional commitment and dedication as the *Hikayat* tells of his experience in teaching Malay language for his living and describes the nature of his job. But the core principle is still the same: his dedication goes beyond the ordinary call of duty, as he devotes his utmost efforts to defending the tarnished image of the British Company. Examples of this tendency are the episodes about the rumours about the Chapel and the scepticism of the Chinese about British's capability of winning the war with China, which illustrate clearly his sense of loyalty to his British rulers.

Abdullah was willing to subject himself to condemnation and rejection by his friends, relatives and community by helping the British to buy land for the building of a chapel, and by revealing secret information about the Tien Ti Hui society which might have endangered the life of his Chinese friend who had helped him to get the information, and

who had also protected him from the society. From this perspective, Abdullah's concept of loyalty is different from Nakhoda Muda's as depicted by his son, Lauddin. Nakhoda Muda's or rather, Lauddin's, concept of loyalty is more humanistic and less feudal, for it places human rights and personal integrity above loyalty. Abdullah, explicitly favours colonialism rather than self-government or independence. The idea of nationalism did not exist during his time, and it is therefore unfair to judge him based on "modern" values (as has been done by some scholars). But for Abdullah, life in Malacca and Singapore was much better under the British rule than life under the local rulers. Perhaps he believes that the material comfort and prosperity will bring social improvements, hence, Abdullah values the material comfort and prosperity of a country more than a poor and unstable self-governing country. Although, he seems to condemn abuses of feudalism, he cannot be regarded as a truly reformist and democratic writer, as described by some scholars.

TRADITIONAL STYLES OF EXPRESSION

Perhaps the most conspicuously conventional feature adopted by Abdullah is in his use of styles of expression. Abdullah employs traditional styles of expression to describe his characters. He uses *nasihat* (advice), proverbs, sayings, *pantun*, *syair*, analogies, similes and metaphors as literary devices. Abdullah is very fond of using *peribahasa* (proverbs) and *nasihat* (advice). He has used about 156 Malay proverbs (refer to appendix 3 for the list) and almost every narrated event is followed by *nasihat*. In fact, on many occasions, he uses these rather indiscriminately and excessively in order to express only a single idea.

He adopts traditional forms of poetry (*pantun* and *syair*) but gives these contemporary treatment. For example, he describes Raffles and his wife as having excellent personalities in the following *pantun*:

*Puyu-puyu konon namanya
di dalam kolam konon tempatnya
cantik manis barang lakunya
serta dengan budi bahasanya*

*dalam kolam konon tempatnya
dipijak oleh laksama
cantik manis barang lakunya
serta dengan bijaksananya*
(1953:83)

He finds that their characters are very different compared to the characters of local married couples:

*Apakah konon berkain batik
kalau tidak dengan sujinya?
Apa guna berbini cantik
kalau tidak dengan budinya?*

*Kalau tidak dengan sujinya
pakaian Jawa dirumahnya
kalau tidak dengan budinya
jauh dirimu dari padanya*
(1953:84)

Abdullah was close to Raffles and his wife. So when they were about to leave Singapore, he was very sad and wrote the following pantuns to express his appreciation and admiration of them:

*Burung belibis di atas lantai
buah rambai dalam padi
Tuan Raffles orang yang pandai
tahu sungguh mengambil hati*

*Buah rambai dalam padi
lazat cita pula rasanya
pandai sungguh mengambil hati
serta dengan budi bahasanya*

*Lazat cita pula rasanya
jeruju dengan durinya
serta dengan budi bahasanya
setuju pula dengan isterinya*

*Jeruju dengan durinya
di tepi jalan orang berlari
setuju pula dengan isterinya
seperti bulan dengan matahari
(1953:250-251)*

Abdullah perceives Raffles and his wife as an ideal couple. On the other hand, the marriage between Sultan Hussein's daughter and Abdul Kadir, to him was an incompatible relationship:

*Penggaga dalam timba
mari digoreng dalam kual
seekor naga di lautan China
digonggong kambing, dibawa lari*

*Patah ranting ditengah rimba
patah dititi malim sisi
Sungguhpun gajah binatang besar
sudahlah rezeki si ular lidi
(1953:360)*

His *pantuns* on Governor Butterworth are the longest written *pantuns* in the *Hikayat*, consisting of six stanzas of *pantun berkait*:

*Buaian kendor jangan ditarik
bagai teguh buatan sendiri
Tuan Gubernur orang yang baik
Pandai sungguh memerintahkan negeri*

*Bagai teguh buatan sendiri
tali kecil jangan dikerat
pandai sungguh memerintah negeri
Tau pula mengambil hati segala rakyat*

*Tali kecil jangan dikerat
sama tunduk memintal benang
tau pula mengambil hati segala rakyat
semuanya duduk di dalam senang*

*Komala bertali dalam puan satu
dicapai budak tali sekerat
kepala sekali pekerjaan Tuan itu
membuangkan perampok dari laut Selat*

*Dicapai budak tali sekerat
Gaharu dipegang serta ditatang
Membuangkan perampok dari laut Selat
Baharulah orang senang pergi datang*

*Gaharu dipegang serta ditatang
menyala apinya amat kelihatan
Baharulah senang orang pergi datang
Allah memberi selamat kepada Tuan!*

(1953:412-413)

Abdullah has continued to use not only traditional forms of poetry, but has also adopted the conventional author's sensibility with its typical sense of romantic idealism and adoration in character description. Another form of poetry employed by Abdullah is *syair*. He uses *syair* to describe one contemporary event, the great fire of Singapore, which had affected him personally. This is more a continuation of a realistic poetic spirit which has been explored in earlier war *syair* such as the *Syair Perang Mekasar* by Encik Amin.⁶

⁶ For more information about this *syair* see Skinner (1963).

*Serta terpandang api itu menjulang
rasanya arwahku bagaikan hilang
dijilatnya rumah-rumah serta barang-barang
seperti anak ayam disambar lang.
Seberang-menyeberang rumah habis rata
apinya cemerlang, tiada membuka mata
Bunyinya gembur terlalu gempita
lemahlah tulang sendi anggota.
Pakaianku menyalalah seperti kertas
limau manis pun meletup seperti petas
Orang menolong pun terlalu pantas
merebut barang-barang terlalu lekas.
Ringgit pun hancurlah seperti timah
habislah meleleh ke bawah tanah
Tiadalah tentu barang yang dijamah.
Pencuri pun mengangkutlah bersama-sama
barang yang hendak kubawa pulang.
Beberapa pinggan mangkuk cawan dan dulang
sekaliannya itu habislah hilang
Harapnya hatiku bukan kepalang.
(1953:320)*

Concept of Beauty

- “Yang Indah-indah dan Manis-manis”

Abdullah never intended to change traditional styles of expression. Instead, he tries to emulate and preserve conventional styles because he finds these styles “*indah-indah dan manis-manis*” (very beautiful and pleasantly sweet). We can find his own explanation for this preference:

“..aku telah belajar serta bertanya akan rahsia-rahsia bahasa Melayu itu dan mendapat-dapat barang tuladan atau petua atau tiruan. Dan lagi pula, adalah yang telah kudapati beberapa banyak perkataan bahasa Melayu dan nama yang pelik-pelik dan umpamaan dan kias dan ibarat dan ikatan perkataan yang indah-indah dan yang manis-manis dan sebagainya. Itu semuanya dari sebab usahaku bertanya-tanya dan membaca hikayat-hikayat yang dahulu kala dan karang-karangan orang tua-tua.” (1953:41)

Abdullah's notion of beauty in writing is very influenced by his great interest in and reading of conventional literature. He describes his fondness for traditional metaphors and strange and unusual words (*pelik-pelik*). Traditional literature and its conventional expressions are his literary models (*tuladan atau petua*) which he tries to preserve and imitate closely (*tiruan*).

His attempt to continue writing in conventional styles of expression is shown in the *mukadimah* (prologue). He follows closely the expressions in the *Sejarah Melayu*:

“jadi beratlah atas anggota fakir”

(Sejarah Melayu, 1952:2)

“menjadi masjgullah aku serta beratlah rasanya anggotaku”

(Hikayat Abdullah, 1953:1)

“maka fakir perkejutlah diri fakir pada menguasai dia, syahadan mohonkan taufik kehadiran Allah”

(Sejarah Melayu, 1952:3)

“maka tiba2 tersadarlah seolah2 dikejutkan orang akan daku dari pada tidurku sambil berkata demikian: Jikalau kiranya engkau hina, memintalah pada yang mulia, dan jika engkau miskin, pintalah pada yang kaya dan jikalau kurang pahammu, pohonkanlah kepada Tuhan yang telah berjanji barangsiapa yang meminta ia kan mendapat.” (Hikayat Abdullah, 1953:3)

Another traditional device employed by Abdullah is found in the description of the welcome ceremony for Lord Minto:

“Maka kalau bunyi tambur dan bunyi kaki manusia seperti ribut besar adanya. Adapun segala supai-supai dan orang-orang besarnya semuanya memakai pakaian baru belaka, berkilat-kilat sebab kena sinar matahari. Maka adalah panjangnya baris itu kira-kira sejam perjalanan tiada putus. Itupun diaturnya dua lapis dan empat lapis. Maka penuh sesaklah dengan baris itu dalam Malaka.” (Hikayat Abdullah 1953:97)

“Kemudian segala kapal-kapal yang ada dilaut itupun semuanya menembaklah, bunyinya seperti bertih digoring. Ada kira-kira dua jam tiga jam tiada berputusan bunyi meriam. Maka kelam kabutlah lautan itu oleh asap bedil itu.” (Hikayat Abdullah 1953:98)

The above phrases are examples of formulaic expressions of conventional literature. Another example which follows closely the schematic style of conventional narratives is the following description:

“maka pada hari itu segala bangsa orangpun beribu2 berhimpunlah disana, besar kecil, tua muda, laki2 perempuan, yang timpang bertongkat, yang buta berpimpin, yang kaya berkereta, yang miskin berjalan kaki.” (Hikayat Abdullah 1953:407).

Abdullah's attempts to preserve conventional styles, unfortunately, are not linguistically effective or successful. His language has been strongly criticized by several writers and scholars.⁷ This is rather ironic and a great setback for his *hikayat*, for Abdullah greatly stressed the importance of proper language learning and condemned severely those who did not show any appreciation for this aspect. However, despite his linguistic weaknesses, and without the mastery and refined language attained by Hamzah Fansuri and Raja Ali Haji and Raja Ahmad, Abdullah is able to express himself clearly, though with less aesthetic effect. His other achievements, such as his own concept of literature, authorship and the notion of self, have overshadowed his linguistic weaknesses. His writings must be judged accordingly and it is not fair to single out these weaknesses and merely blame them on his ethnic background.

HIS OWN LITERARY ANALOGIES

Abdullah, nevertheless, is more effective in producing his own literary expressions. He has created several analogies which are creative and effective:

"maka disangkakannya oleh mereka itu bahasa Melayu itu terlalu senang, boleh dapat dengan segeranya, bukannya bagai bahasa lain2 terlalu susah. Maka sangka yang

⁷ Datoek Besar and Roolvink find his language "*seringkali kurang terpelihara, kadang-kadang pula sehingga tak dapat diartikan*" (1953:xvi); Kassim Ahmad writes that it is "*jauh daripada nama modern*" and "*memperlihatkan kelemahan-kelemahan dalam gaya bahasa*" (1981:xiii,xv); and Traill describes it as "*unidiomatic*", "*bazaar Malay*" and "*unpleasing to the ear*"; "*show an incomplete knowledge of Malay usage or a misunderstanding of what he had learnt*" and regards Abdullah as "*example of a writer who has learnt the words, but lacks the basic feeling, of a language not his own*". Traill then attributes the weaknesses to his '*Peranakan Keling*' background (1979:76,78,80,81).

Some western writers, however, have made positive remarks about his language. The earliest comment was made by Alfred North in his letter attached to the 1843 ms of the *Hikayat*. He finds that the *Hikayat* is written "*in beautiful Malay*" and has introduced "*many of the everyday phrases or idioms of the people; so that the book is also a storehouse for the student of the language*". (Skinner 1978:481). Hill regards his language as innovative as his *Hikayat* contains forty-three different English words. Hill believes that Abdullah's association with Englishmen had widened his intellectual horizon and led him into experiments in phrasology and the use of new words for new needs (1985:20).

demikian itu sekali2 tiada betul, kerana ia belum mengetahui jalan bahasa Melayu dan belum ia termasuk kedalam belukar bahasa Melayu itu. Maka jikalau kiranya dimasukinya, nischaya dilihatnya dan diketahuinya ada beberapa tebal semaknya dan beberapa duri yang tajam2 yang ada terlindung dichelah2 rumput itu. Maka sedikit salah melangkah terchuchuk dikaki dan sedikit salah berlenggang tertikam ditangan. Maka kebanyakan juga orang yang sudah masuk kedalam belukar itu, sebab mendengar khabar orang, disangkanya mudah juga berjalan, maka serta ia masuk dengan berlari maka terchuchuklah duri dikaki tangannya dan bengkak bengkil tubuhnya menjadi tiada berketahuan rupa, kemudian dengan beberapa susahya keluarlah ia pergi menchari orang yang tahukan obatnya. Maka apabila sudah diobati oleh orang yang pandai, lalu dimashurkannya dirinya, katanya: 'Akulah sudah masuk kedalam hutan dan belukar bahasa Melayu itu, suatupun tiada bahayanya', tetapi tiada ia sedar maka sungguhnyaapun sakit2nya itu semuanya sudah sembuh, tetapi tinggal lagi parunya chalar balar segenap tubuhnya, maka diketahui oranglah bahwa ia tiada tahu berjalan, maka sebab itulah hanchur badannya ditikam duri." (1953:300-301)

"Shahadan, maka hendaklah pula engkau mengetahui bahawasanya bahasa orang Eropa itu pada tiap2 hari dari dahulu sampai sekarang inipun diperbaikinya dan diterangkan jalannya dan ditebaskannya semak samunnya dan disapunya sampah2nya, maka lorong2nya itupun telah diaturkannya serta diletakkannya pula masing2 perkataan dengan hukum2nya, dan lagi pula iapun seperti hal Melayu juga meminjam perkataan bahasa lain2 bangsa, dijadikannya bahasanya sendiri. Maka sebab itulah pada perasaanku terlalu senang diketahui bahasa itu. Maka pada tengah malam yang kelam boleh melarikan kereta diatasnya sebab sekaliannya ada sedia dengan peraturannya." (1953:302-303)

The tree seems to be his favourite symbol or metaphor for describing human development and the quality of life. He gives it two different interpretations: positively, as in the fertile tree (*pohon subur*); and negatively, as in the poisonous or fruitless tree (*pohon kayu racun* or *pohon tiada berbuah*):

"Bukankah patut pada masa kanak2 dan muda inilah ketikanya supaya akal dan pikirannya itu boleh subur seumpama pohon, apabila mudanya itu banyaklah dahannya itu bertumbuh dan chawangnya boleh panjang, maka apabila tuanya kelak banyaklah buahnya? Maka demikianlah hal manusia itupun, kalau tatkala ia lagi kanak2 dipelajarinya barang suatu, nischaya pada masa tuanya kelak bolehlah berguna. Maka ini kulihat hal mereka itu tiadalah sekali2 menjadi susah atau berpikiran akan anak2nya itu, melainkan dibiarkannya akan dia barang sekehendaknya dengan bermain2, bernakal dan menggelumang lumpur pada sepanjang2 jalan, sentiasa dalam hal yang demikian itu. Maka pikiranku bukannya salah anak2 itu, karena ia melihat toladan dari pada ibubapanya, itulah diturutnya, karena hal mereka itu kechualinya ia tahu beranak, tetapi tiada tahu mengajar akan dia, menjadi kelak kesudah2annya seperti pohon kayu rachun adanya; maka barang siapa memakan buahnya itu kelak dapat tiada merasai penyakit dan dukachita juga pedahnya." (1953:429)

Abdullah describes people who are indifferent to the changes in political leadership as "*pohon yang tiada berbuah*" (fruitless tree):

"Maka adalah yaitu kuumpamakan dengan sepohon kayu yang tiada berbuah adanya, apakah gunanya kepada manusia melainkan yaitu ditebang dan dibelah2 akan menjadi kayu api adanya?" (1953:259)

He describes an ignorant person without proper knowledge as “*sebatang buluh*” (bambo stick):

“Seumpama sebatang buluh terdiri, maka pada sangkanya inilah sebatang kayu yang baik lagi lurus, tiada bengkok-bengkok; pasti ada berteras dalamnya. Maka jikalau kiranya orang yang mempunyai budi neschaya dibelahnya dahulu, dilihat didalamnya nischaya didapatinya kosong adanya” (1953:2)

CONCEPT OF WASIAT

A close analysis of his *hikayat* shows that Abdullah has consciously selected and used certain conventional features in a new way to achieve his personal objectives in writing. We also find that he has used creatively certain conventional literary devices by adding new meanings to these, for example in his deployment of *wasiat* (will) in the text.

In conventional narratives, a king normally gives his “*wasiat*” (the will) in the form of a dying injunction which contains the important message of the story. In his *Hikayat*, Abdullah still includes this device but in a different, rather new way:

“Kemudian datanglah suatu pikiran mengatakan jikalau sudah sampai umurku sekarangpun mati, esokpun mati. Maka lalu kuambil sekeping kertas, lalu aku perbuat surat wasiat. Maka aku jadikan kuasaku tuan Thomsen. Maka jikalau kiranya aku kedatangan maut melainkan segala sesuatu hartaku tuan Thomsen wakilku yang boleh menyampaikan sekalian itu kepada anak2 isteriku di Malaka. Adapun aku berbuat pekerjaan itu dengan ikhtiarku sendiri adanya.” (1953:263)

“Maka pada sangkaku matilah aku pada sekali itu. Maka oleh sebab sangat keras sakit itu sebentar2 aku tiada ingat. Maka adalah kira2 malam pukul tiga aku meminta dawat kalam dan kertas. Maka menangislah isteriku sangat, disangkakannya aku hendak mati. Maka dengan gementar2 tanganku lalu kutulislah surat wasiat dari hal hutang piutangku dan rumah tanggaku dan barang suatu harta bendaku, maka kujadikan kuasa atas sekalian itu dua orang Anu, maka ialah menjadi wakilku dibelakang matiku akan menjalankan barang suatu harta bendaku seperti yang tersebut dalam wasiatku itu. Setelah sudah surat itu, maka kuserahkan ketangan isteriku serta dengan segala kunchi2.”
(1953:393)

Abdullah introduces a wider meaning of *wasiat*, making it relevant to the lives of ordinary people and not the exclusive right of the King. The scope of *wasiat* is no longer moral, but is now confined to material aspects. From a literary point of view, the two *wasiat* episodes are very functional and interesting because by using this technique, he is able to reinforce and dramatize significantly his pitiful state and suffering to arouse sympathy in his readers. Abdullah uses *wasiat* as a literary device to convey personal a message of self-importance, and to create suitable narrative impacts to attract and persuade his readers.

Conclusions

Based on Abdullah's own interpretation and explanation of the functions of literature, we may infer that he wrote his *Hikayat* to give his young readers historical knowledge of Malacca and Singapore during his time; to provide the experience of his own life and the success stories of the British leaders as good examples to be followed; and to show the evils

of the Malay rulers and local people as bad examples; and also to teach his readers about the importance and proper usage of the Malay language.

Abdullah still promotes the conventional didactic functions of literature, and upholds the typical concept of Malay loyalty to his ruler, and has written and treated his subject matter with strong personal convictions but makes a rather simple moral judgements. He did not intend to change the conventional styles of expression as he appreciates and believes in preserving the beauty of the old styles of writing, and he continues to use some conventional features to attract and persuade his audience to achieve his personal aims and purposes. However, his selection of those themes and elements has led him to create a new discourse (theme, structure and genre) in Malay literature. By his conscious and selective approach and continuous attempts to project an image of himself as an author and language teacher, he has changed radically the conventional concept of authorship and self in Malay literature. Abdullah is indeed an important literary innovator, but his distinct features are still within the framework of convention, either from the religious system of values or from the traditional styles of expression. Despite all the “myth” building by the West about him and his works, and all the condemnations by the Malays and his society heaped upon him, Abdullah is basically religious and traditional in his thinking and writings.

Appendix 3

Malay Proverbs and Analogies in Hikayat Abdullah

(Datoek Besar and Roolvink, 1953)

1. Seumpama sebatang buluh terdiri [p.2]
2. Jauhari juga yang mengenal manikam [p.2]
3. Belalang telah menjadi lang dan pijat-pijat pun telah menjadi kura-kura dan cacing pun telah menjadi ular naga [p.2]
4. Seperti seekor tikus yang jatuh ke dalam gedung beras [p.7]
5. Ringgit ini seperti air basuh tangan [p.7]
6. Seperti bergantung di rambut sehelai [p.12]
7. Jikalau kebun yang baik tumbuh-tumbuhannya maka jikalau tiada dipagar, dapat tiada masuklah binatang [p.19]
8. Seperti suatu tiang batu adanya [p.20]
9. Air madu yang telah terpancar dari sarang lebah [p.21]
10. Manusia ini seumpama ranting kayu [p.22]
11. Seperti aur ditarik songsang [p.32]
12. Intan itupun suatu batu juga [p.32]
13. Manisnya ilmu itu terlebih daripada air madu [p.37]
14. Umpama seorang perempuan yang kematian suami, tiadalah berseri mukanya [p.55]
15. Batu itu berterbangan bergumpal-gumpal seperti gajah besarnya [p.56]
16. Ada nyawa-nyawa ikan lagi [p.56]

17. Seperti burung yang lengkap dengan dua sayap [p.61]
18. Seperti perang besarlah..seperti petir yang tiada tiada berkeputusan [p.63]
19. Seperti embun yang turun pada sepertigaan malam [67]
20. Seperti mutiara yang terhambur daripada karangannya[68]
21. Ular menyusur akar, bolehkah hilang bisanya [68]
22. Gajah yang besar itu yang berkaki empat, lagi terkadang terserondong dan terkadang ia tersungkur jatuh [68]
23. Burung yang terbang diudara itu lagi terkadang ada masanya ia gugur ke bumi [p.68]
24. Seekor kerbau membawa lumpur, semua kerbau terpalit [71]
25. Tangan kakinya pantasya seperti lipas kudung [83]
26. Seperti raja dengan menteri [83]
27. Seperti cincin dengan permata [83]
28. Seperti susu dengan sakarnya [83]
29. Seperti anjing dengan kucing [84]
30. Seperti kilat pantasya [92]
31. Seperti ribut [92]
32. Sejajar seperti tiang pagar rupanya [95]
33. Seperti kiamat..seperti ribut besar [97]
34. Seperti bertih digoreng [98]
35. Seperti indah khabar dari rupa [98]
36. Adakah air yang penuh dalam tong itu berkocak, melainkan air yang setengah tong itu juga yang berkocak[99]
37. Monyet mendapat bunga [100]

38. Berapakah tingginya terbang bangau itu, akhirnya ia hinggap di belakang kerbau juga [100]
39. Harimau mati meninggalkan belang, gajah mati meninggalkan tulang [100]
40. Sesal dahulu pendapatan, sesal kemudian tiada berguna [115]
41. Sebab nila setitik rusak susu sebelanga [115]
42. Burung gagak itu jikalau dimandikan dengan air mawar dan diberi makan ambar kasturi sekalipun, tiada akan menjadi putih bulunya yang hitam [115]
43. Sudah terang lagi bersuluh [121]
44. Seperti antan dicungkilkan duri [122]
45. Seperti orang buta kehilangan tongkat [139]
46. Tiada rotan, akar pun bergunalah [152]
47. Di tempat tiada lang, kata belalang akulah lang [152]
48. Jikalau banyak pun anjing menyalak bukit, bolehkah runtuh [152]
49. Jikalau seponoh kayu banyak akarnya lagi teguh, apakah ditakutkan ribut? [152]
50. Barang siapa menggali lubang, ia juga terperosok ke dalamnya [154]
51. Hutang emas dapat dibayar, hutang budi dibawa mati [155]
52. Keledai hendak dijadikan kuda [161]
53. Jikalau tiada dapat dibaiki, tetapi jangan dipecahkan [161]
54. Lintah yang menghisap darah dari dalam badannya [166]
55. Seperti harimau hendak menerkam lakunya [168]
56. Seperti bunyi suara orang meratap [168]
57. Seperti binatang yang buas [176]
58. Bagai melihat harimau [176]
59. Lintah yang meminum darah [182]

60. Hendak menjadi ular sawah [182]
61. Kudis menjadi tokak [182]
62. Pisau dan parang itu tumpul, maka mulut manusia terlebih pula tajam adanya [183]
63. Lidahnya tiada bertulang [185]
64. Perompak seperti anak ayam jinaknya [185]
65. Kekeringan seperti ikan yang kena jemur [188]
66. Seperti harimau membaham tanah [188]
67. Musim kemarau keras dalam Melaka...hujan lebat datang dari Selat [188]
68. Sampah sekalipun boleh menjadi duit [189]
69. Manisnya seperti laut madu [193]
70. Ombak waswas yang berpalu-paluan di atas karang wasangka [193]
71. Umpama matahari yang baharu terbit [196]
72. Seperti air pasanglah datangnya [197]
73. Seperti kambing dengan harimau [198]
74. Hutan menjadi negeri dan negeri menjadi hutan [202]
75. Untung sabut timbul, untung batu tenggelam [203]
76. Tak boleh dibaiki, jangan dipecahkan [208]
77. Sesal dahulu pendapatan, sesal kemudian itu suatu pun tiada apa gunanya [209]
78. Seperti api bernyala marahnya [218]
79. Mulut disuap pisang dan pantat dikait onak [222]
80. Seperti sepohon kayu dalam hutan [228]
81. Seperti kata Arab: jahil murakkab, artinya jahil bersusun dua kali [228]
82. Judi itulah ibu kejahatan [242]
83. Jangankan air hujan, air perigi pun kering [244]

84. Menadah akan air hujan selebat itu [244]
85. Yang secupak itu tiadalah boleh menjadi segantang [245]
86. Jangankan hujan lebat, rintik-rintiknya pun tiada [246]
87. Sudah teduh hujan, maka baharulah aku bangun daripada tidur [246]
88. Memakan suap terlalu banyak [254]
89. Seperti anak dengan bapa [257]
90. Terutama mati dengan nama yang baik daripada hidup dengan nama yang jahat [258]
91. Sepuluh bintang bertabur, bolehkah sama dengan bulan yang satu [258]
92. Seperti kelakuan perempuan kematian suaminya, rambutnya kusut, mukanya masam, duduklah ia dengan dukacitanya, kerana serinya telah tiada [258]
93. Asal ada nasi dalam periuknya, asal kenyang perutnya, sudahlah [258]
94. Sepuluh kapal datang pun, anjing bercawat ekor juga [258]
95. Kuumpamakan dengan sepohon kayu yang tiada berbuah adanya, apakah gunanya kepada manusia melainkan iaitu ditebang dan dibelah-belah akan menjadi kayu api adanya? [259]
96. Seperti sudah mati hidup kembali rasanya [265]
97. Seperti orang berperang lakunya [275]
98. Muka masing2 merah seperti bunga raya sebab mabuk [275]
99. Seperti orang yang terikat kaki tangannya [293]
100. Sesal dahulu pendapatan, sesal kemudian tiada apa gunanya [293]
101. Adapun harimau itu ditakuti orang sebab giginya [296]
102. Tiada termakan dalam akal nya seperti kata Melayu: didengar ada, dipakai tidak. [312]

103. Seperti orang menuangkan secawan air tawar kedalam laut [314]
104. Jikalau asalnya manikam itu, kalau jatuh kedalam limbahan sekalipun tiada akan hilang cahayanya [318]
105. Seperti ayam disambar lang [320]
106. Seperti orang tidur lelap [330]
107. Seperti benih yang baik adanya [331]
108. Jikalau tiada rotan, akarpun berguna [332]
109. Dimana tempat tiada lang, bilalang mengaku dirinya lang [332]
110. Seperti raja dengan menteri [344]
111. Haripun terang cuaca menjadi redup, maka awan yang mengandung hujan itupun rintik2lah turunnya, alamat orang bercerai dengan kekasihnya [344]
112. Bunyi pintu dan jendela seperti ribut besar [346]
113. Seperti orang berkelahi dalam mimpi [346]
114. Minta buang kulit babi yang tersungkap dikepalanya dan minta basuhkan arang yang tercunting dimukanya [349]
115. Seperti orang menangkap bayang2 dalam cermin [354]
116. Seperti ayam kehilangan anak lakunya [357]
117. Bebas seperti orang dalam rumahnya [358]
118. Ringgit seperti air basuh tangan [358]
119. Segala semut dan kerengga dan kutu yang didalam rongga kayu dan lobang tanah sekalian keluarlah mengurung gula tumpah [358]
120. Darah pun berkopah2 seperti orang menyembelih kerbau [359]
121. Seekor cacing menelan naga [360]
122. Naga digonggong kambing [360]

123. Gajah menjadi rezeki ular lidi [360]
124. Seperti membunuh seekor semut [361]
125. Dipandang seperti seekor anjing juga [362]
126. Seperti api, maka tatkala ia kecil itu kawan, maka apabila besar kelak menjadi lawan [368]
127. Kerbau punya susu, sapi punya nama [370]
128. Seperti telur dihujung tanduk [372]
129. Dipukulnya bunyian itu seperti lagu orang menangis [373]
130. Indah khabar dari rupa [382]
131. Seperti kelakuan orang takut berjalan dalam hutan, maka daun kayu ditiup angin, disangkanya harimau [384]
132. Adakah pernah telaga yang keruh itu mengalirkan airnya jernih? [389]
133. Jikalau dihulu airnya keruh dapat tiada hilirnya pun keruh juga [389]
134. Seperti kaca terhempas dibatu [394]
135. Seperti ayam disambar lang ghaib daripa mataku [394]
136. Seperti anak ayam kehilangan ibu [394]
137. Pelanduklah lupakan jerat, tetapi jerat tiada melupakan pelanduk [397]
138. Seperti susu dengan sakarnya [404]
139. Seperti cincin dengan permata [404]
140. Pohon yang baik itu akhirnya memberi buah yang baik juga [404]
148. Seperti anak ayam jinak [405]
149. Seperti bapa memelihara anaknya [406]
150. Seperti katak bawah tempurung [414]
151. Seperti pohon kayu dalam hutan [419]

152. Seperti ikan yang kecil-kecil [419]
153. Seperti laku membunuh seekor semut sahaja [420]
154. Pada tatkala rebung tiada dipatah, maka ketika sudah menjadi aur apakah gunanya [421]
155. Api itu pada tatkala kecilnya iaitu kawan, apabila besar, menjadi lawan [421]
156. Seumpama harimau yang garang [422]
157. Jikalau pagar itu sendirinya membinasakan tanaman [422]
156. Sangka katak dibawah tempurung, karena sangkanya tempurung itu lah langit [428]

- Abdullah's life
- + British's line of life

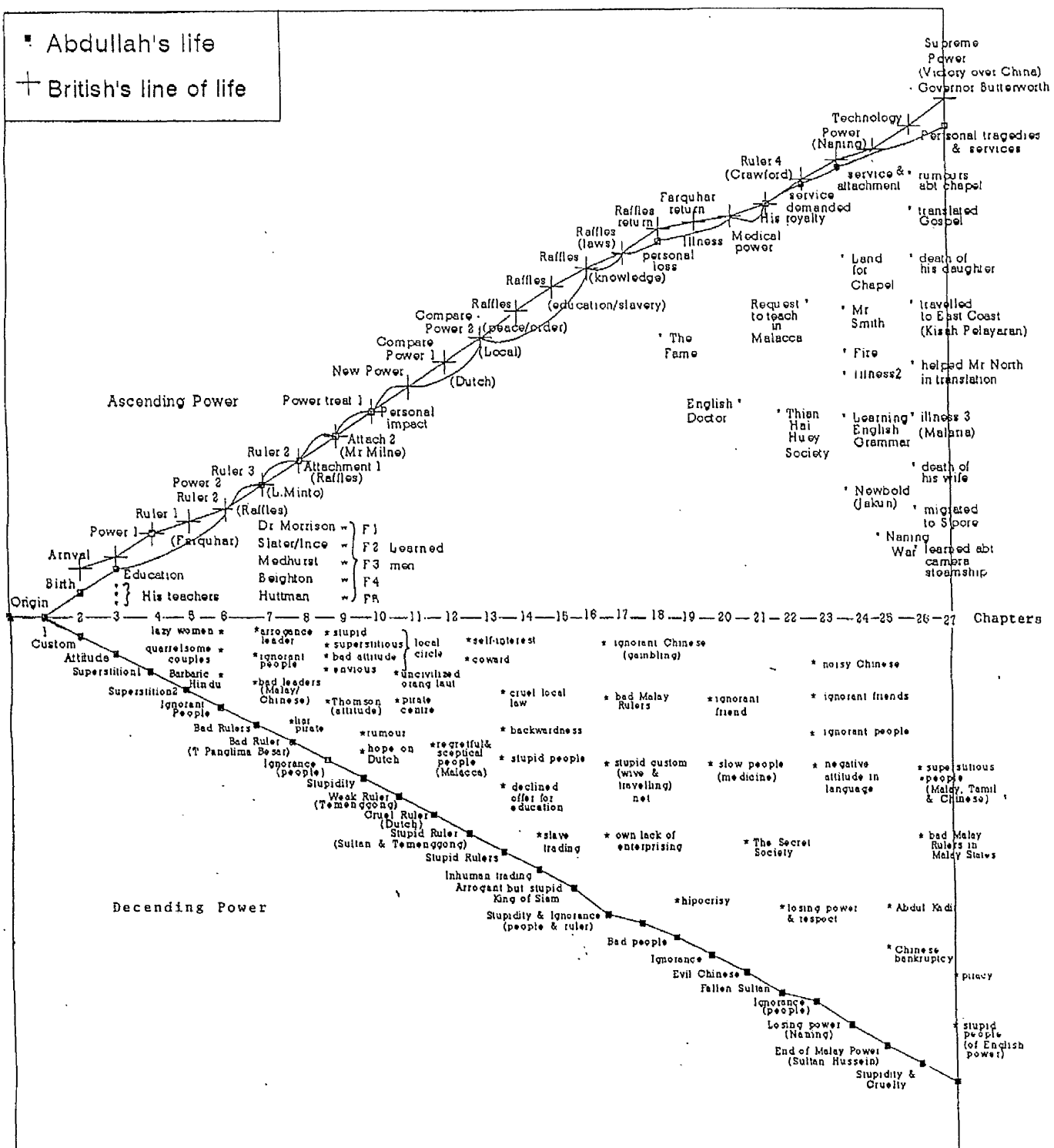


Figure 4: THE COMPOSITIONAL STRUCTURE
AND BINARY OPPOSITION TECHNIQUE
IN *HIKAYAT ABDULLAH*

CHAPTER 9

TUHFAT AL-NAFIS

Introduction

Since earlier studies and views dating from the 1960s and 1970s (discussed in Chap 1), Raja Ali Haji's works have continued to attract attention, and more significant analyses have been produced by Matheson (1979, 1991), Muhd Yusoff Hashim (1991) and Abu Hassan Sham (1991,1993,1994,1995). Matheson and Muhd Yusoff have focussed on Raja Ali's masterpiece, *Tuhfat al-Nafis* (TN); and Abu Hassan Sham on his poetry.

Matheson has clarified the crucial problem of the author(s) of the text. From the five traceable manuscripts of TN, she finds that the text can be divided into two types: a short and long versions. Only one of the manuscripts is regarded as representing the short version (about 88,000 words); the other four manuscripts represent the long one with about 127,000 words (1991:18). Based on her edition and analysis of the text, Matheson has hypothesized that the short version of the text was written by Raja Ahmad and the long version was the work of his son, Raja Ali Haji (1991:37,43). Matheson also believes that Raja Ahmad wrote the short version between 1865-66 and Raja Ali Haji completed the long version before 1872 (1991:45). Her view supports the observation made earlier by Sweeney, who notes that the text was written by Raja Ali's father and only completed by Raja Ali (Sweeney 1967:156).

This chapter is a modest attempt to answer the issues raised earlier on the nature of Raja Ali Haji's and Raja Ahmad's contribution to the development of Malay literature (Chap 1) by analysing their work, TN, as a literary work, based on Matheson's edition (1991).

The Narrative

TN, to-date known in English as 'the precious gift',¹ is a historical documentation and personal interpretation of the relationship between Malays and Bugis in the Malay world.² It covers the origin, development and fall of Malay Sultanates in Palembang, Singapura, Melaka, with special focus on the Johor- Riau Kingdom, up till the period of British and Dutch colonialism in the region. The content of the narrative is explained as follows:

'dan di dalamnya menyatakan salasilah dan perjalanan dan tawarikh dan segala khabar-khabar...dan aku namai akan dia Tuhfat al -Nafis pada menyatakan kelakuan daripada raja-raja Melayu dan Bugis' (1991:128)

Thus, the text consists of "*salasilah*" (family tree), "*perjalanan*" (way of life/style of rulership), "*kelakuan*" (conduct/personality); "*khabar-khabar*" (news/ information) and "*tawarikh*" (dates) pertaining to the Bugis and Malay kings.

The authors have divided the text into two 'bab' (sections):

- ¹ A.H.Johns questions the legitimacy of this English rendering. He finds that the meaning of the title Tuhfat al-Nafis needs to be considered because there is a slight cultural dissonance in the author describing the gift he offers as 'precious' and, also problems of incorrect rendering. Hence he suggests 'Dedication to the Splendid Endeavour' (of recording the circumstances of the Malay and Bugis kings), or words of that effect. (See Johns 1992:319-323)
- ² Za'ba, however, translated the title as "the Rare Gift" (See Za'ba 1940:143)
For further discussion on this Malay-Bugis relationship and the Bugis diaspora in the Malay world see Andaya (1995:119-138).

- a. section one - on the family tree of the rulers (pages 2-43)

'Bermula bab yang pertama pada menyatakan salasilah mereka'

(1991:128)

- b. section two - on their rulership and personality (pages 43-455)

'Bermula bab yang kedua pada menyatakan perjalanan dan kelakuan segala raja-raja yang telah disebut itu'

(1991:175)

Section one consists of brief description of the salasilah of Malay rulers who began their rule in Bukit Seguntang, Palembang Sumatra and later ruled Singapura, Melaka, Johor and Siak in Sumatra. The family tree of the famous five Bugis brothers (Opu Dahing Parani, Opu Dahing Menambun, Opu Dahing Marewah, Opu Dahing Cellak and Opu Dahing Kemasi) is also included. This section provides a brief but broad introduction to the more detailed historical accounts discussed in the following section.

Section two narrates the main historical events which not only reflect the personalities of Malay and Bugis rulers from the reign of Sultan Mahmud of Johor (mangkat dijulung), whose death later triggered a series of power struggles among his descendants in Johor and Siak which involved the Bugis rulers. The involvement and establishment of Bugis rule in Malay states such as Johor, Riau, Lingga, Selangor, Perak, Kedah, Pahang, Trengganu, Kelantan, Singapura, Melaka, Pontianak etc., either through warfare or intermarriage, is explained chronologically. The text describes events covering

nearly two centuries (18th and 19th) encompassing the entire Malay world. It was conceived on a scale unprecedented in most traditional literature (Matheson, 1982:5).

The 18th century events are based on several written and oral sources. On the other hand, the 19th century events are based on the authors' personal participation in and observations of the episodes happening not only within the kingdom but also during their travels and experiences abroad. TN presents a very wide range of sources of information, rich and colourful in narrative content and events:

"There is thus a pronounced change in historiographical method as the Tuhfat relies not so much on manuscripts for its information but on the reminiscence of living witnesses. The precise detail of such episodes as the Governor-General's reception in Batavia, the instruction provided by Islamic teachers on Riau, the continuing efforts to suppress piracy in the archipelago, make the Tuhfat a treasury of information for historians. Across the span of nearly two centuries we can see, through Raja Ali Haji's eyes, the marvels of Dutch theatre in Batavia, or sense the exhilarating atmosphere of Mecca during the pilgrimage month, the excitement of mingling with Muslims from all over the world." (Matheson 1982:7)

Self, Narrative and Literary Patronage

The text presents what is actually the authors' personal perception of history or the past and of their own experiences (Muhd Yusoff Hashim 1992:517). The authors document the life and development of Malay-Bugis rulers, and their own life in palace and among court circles. Their work is very much centred upon the *istana* and is rather conservative and elitist (Muhd Yusoff Hashim 1991:516), and it has continued the patronage tradition of the

palace, by making the patrons themselves write and defend their own way and circle of life, as attempted by Tun Seri Lanang in writing *Sejarah Melayu*. Perhaps the authors felt that there were no other suitable scribes who could document and represent the Buginese views of the events in response to several written works which give the Malay and Minangkabau perspective, such as the **Peringatan Sejarah Negeri Johor** and **Siak Chronicles**.³ The need to produce a Buginese interpretation as a counter to the earlier ones, and the growing challenge resulting from Western encroachment into the local court, cultural and religious life of their day, motivated these authors to write and defend their group's past and existing interests. As such their writing offers an ideological approach in its treatment of power within the palace and an independent outlook in its manifestation of self in narrative.

Firstly, the text is produced through authors' own initiative and motivation:

"dan berbangkitlah hatiku bahawa memperbuat kitab ini yang simpan..."

(1991:128)

The title is also their own choice:

"dan aku namai akan dia Tuhfat al-Nafis pada menyatakan kelakuan daripada raja-raja Melayu serta Bugis" (1991:128)

The authors use 'ku' or 'aku' for first person pronouns ('I'), instead of the conventional phrases for self reference, "*fakir*" (the destitute) or "*yang empunya cerita*" (the possessor of the story). This self reference has given a definite and more intimate sense

³ For further informations on these two texts see Kratz (1973), Andaya (1975), and Yusoff Hashim (1992).

of self-definition, suitable for the personal claims made by the authors for the authority of their words, based on direct involvements and personal experiences.

Even though they refer to various early written documents and oral sources of information, they are selective and critical in their use of the sources, to suit their personal judgement and motives of writing (See Andaya 1975:6; Matheson, 1982,1991; and Muhd Yusuf,1992). Compared to certain traditional scribes, such as the authors of the **Sejarah Melayu** and **Hikayat Hang Tuah**, the authors of TN are rather explicit in their expression of personal views or criticism of events and personalities, and the imposition of their self importance.

TN is a synthesized historiographical work based on three major sources of historiografic tradition- the Malay, Bugis and Islam (Matheson 1991). Nevertheless, the narrative is basically about the rise and fall of power shared by Malay and Bugis rulers in the Riau-Lingga Sultanate. From this perspective and based on the authors' motive for writing, the text may also be considered as a political narrative.

Tuhfat al-Nafis as Political Narrative

The Bugis were able to create a successful diaspora government based on an effective assimilation of Bugis political institution and cultural values within a local framework (Andaya 1995:136). Andaya, based on his historical analysis finds that "*For the period from 1699 until 1728 the Tuhfat al-Nafis should be regarded as a document justifying and legitimizing the Buginese intervention in the Malay world and more particularly, in the Kingdom of Johor.*" (1975:8). He observes that Raja Ali Haji [and Raja Ahmad] "*carefully*

selects his sources in defence of ancestors" (1975:6) and *"to support a specific position or attitude held by himself and his 'clients'"* (1975:7). This finding has been reiterated by Matheson who writes that the above factor is the principal theme of the text (1982:115).

This chapter does not intend to discuss the political and historical validity of the text, but focuses instead, on its literary merits. It analyzes how and what literary devices are used by the authors to achieve their personal aims. Raja Ali Haji and Raja Ahmad are not only selective in their sources, but more than that they have utilised conventional narrative themes and styles to deliver their points and achieve their aims. This is seen by analysing the compositional structure of the text and the other literary devices employed.

Narrative Structure

The text is a rather complex piece with numerous sub-themes and sub-plot developments; hence it is difficult to identify its general structure. Only by tracing and constructing its inner structure can we formulate an organised form of the text. This is only possible by viewing and analysing the text from the perspective of power. From the locus of power, the authors have organised and composed their narrative. The following compositional structure has been formulated based on the power perspective:

The Compositional Structure of Tuhfat al-Nafis

1. Mukadimah (God as Source of Power)
2. Section 1 - The Salasilah of the rulers (the networks of power)
3. Section 2 - the Narrative: Mechanism and Pattern of Power
 - 3.1. The Origin of power

- 3.2. The Foreshadowing of power
- 3.3. The Beginning of power
- 3.4. The Pinnacle of Heroic Power (Raja Haji)
- 3.5. Power Conflicts, Decline, Restoration or Cyclic

Development of Power

- 4. The end of Narration - Current state of Power
- 5. Epilogue - Invitation for improvement of text

The Mukadimah

The authors begin the text with a conventional narrative opening, which is actually a statement of belief reaffirming their religious conviction that God is the Source of all powers and the Great Creator:

“segala puji-pujian bagi Allah yang telah menjadikan dunia dan akhirat dengan Kuasa-Nya dan Kehendak-Nya dan telah menjadikan manusia yang indah-indah perbuatan perbuatan-Nya dan hikmat-Nya” (1991:127)

Man is God’s great creation but is not perfect, for he tends to make mistakes in life. Realizing the true nature of human nature and its limited power, the authors end the Mukadimah with a prayer expressing self realization and hoping for God’s forgiveness for the possible errors in their work. By doing this they reinforce the Supreme power of God:

“padahal mengharapkan aku akan Allah yang mengampuni daripada tersalah pada segala tawarikh dan pada perjalanannya. Ya Tuhanku, berkenankan oleh-Mu akan pinta hamba-Mu.” (1991:128)

Network of Power

The *salasilah* described in the text provides the scope and extent of power within the Malay world. It shows that the arrangement, diffusion and consolidation of power is determined greatly by blood (descent), marriage and physical superiority (winning in war). The *salasilah* illustrates the general framework of the network of Bugis-Malay power over certain historical periods, and reflects the development and nature of Malay and Bugis power in the region. This part confers an aura of grandeur on Buginese as a superior political group; attaches a sense of self-importance to the authors for being core members of the group and; also adds greater significance to the task undertaken, namely the writing of such an important piece of work.

The Narrative: Mechanism and Pattern of Power

After providing a clear background and setting for the narrative, the authors then describe the origin of Bugis power in Malay world, i.e. when the five brothers decided to leave their country to travel around and see the world:

"Maka ia pun bertanggung bermohon pergi mengembara dahulu/hendak bermain-main/melihat temasya negeri-negeri orang" (1991:179)

The conventional Malay folk romances or fantastic adventure hikayat and the Panji tales, such as the *Hikayat Hang Tuah* and *Hikayat Isma Yatim*, normally include certain elements such as dreams or fortune telling (*ramalan ahli nujum*) in the early part of narration when their main protagonists were born or start their life adventure, to foreshadow their future destiny. Hang Tuah's great future has been foreshadowed in his father's dream, in which a moon shining brightly onto Hang Tuah's body, when he was

only a little child. TN also employs a similar narrative technique. The great future of the Bugis brothers is foreshadowed earlier before they even set off on the historic journey. Here, the authors have used the conventional element of a dream as their literary device to describe the symbolic power of their manhood and strength:

“Apabila sudah siap maka muafakatliah ia hendak masuk ke negeri Johor dan Melaka mengembara pada sebelah tanah itu, kerana ia sudah mendapat (satu) alamat tatkala masa hendak keluar daripada tanah Bugis itu: iaitu Opu Daing Menambun ada bermimpi akan zakar saudaranya Opu Dahing Cellak itu menjulur/laut/ menjadi naga. Adalah kepalanya mengadap ke sebelah pihak barat Johor. Maka ditakbirkan orang, anak cucunya akan mendapat kerajaan (di sebelah Johor) dan Riau berpanjangan (jua) masanya (adanya). Syahadan apabila sudah putuslah muafakatnya, maka lalulah ia belayar mengembara ke sebelah barat melihat temasya negeri orang, daripada satu negeri kepada satu negeri adanya.” (1991:184)

In the course of their explorations and travels to countries to find out about the life of others, the Bugis rulers became involved in internal political affairs and later even shaped the destiny of local life. Therefore several historical events, part of the background of linkages, are illustrated in the text besides reasons for or justification of Bugis interference in the affairs of Malay rule. It started in Kedah when Daing Marewa was asked by a prince of Kedah for military assistance in a war against his brother in 1715. The Malay rulers sought Buginese help in the internal power struggle because of their reknowned strength and skill in combat, resulting from better organisation and discipline than their Malay allies or adversaries (Andaya 1975:235). After the Minangkabau conquest of Johor in 1718 led by Raja Kecil, who claimed to be the son of Sultan Mahmud of Johor

who was murdered in the year 1699, the involvement of the Buginese became more prominent. The family of the defeated Bendahara dynasty, Sultan Abdul Jalil, sought their assistance to regain the throne. The beginning of their involvement in the Kingdom of Johor is described by TN in the episode below:

“Syahadan tersebut di dalam siarah Siak, adalah /yang/ Tengku Tengah itulah yang sangat-sangat hendak menghapuskan kemaluannya itu. Maka muafakat(lah) ia dengan saudaranya Raja Sulaiman (itu), maka lalu ia memanggil opu-opu itu makan. Kemudian Tengku Tengah pun berdiri di pintu selasar membuka bidai, melepak subang/nya/di telinga sambil ia berkata. “Hai raja Bugis, jikalau sungguh tuan hamba berani, tutuplah kemaluan hamba ini anak-beranak saudara-bersaudara! Maka ((apabila)) tertutup kemaluan beta semua (ini), maka relalah beta (semua ini) menjadi hamba raja Bugis: jika hendak disuruh jadi penanak nasi ((raja)) sekalipun relalah beta.”

According to TN, the Buginese were specifically invited by Sultan Sulaiman and his sister, Tengku Tengah, to reconquer Johor from Raja Kecil. Raja Kecil, on the pretext of conducting their father, Sultan Abdul Jalil, back in state to Riau, had had him treacherously murdered in 1721 (Andaya 1975:292). When the Bugis brothers heard this challenging request, they agreed to help and this led to the formulation of an agreement between both parties:

“Maka apabila /opu-opu dan/ Opu Dahing Parani mendengar kata Tengku Tengah itu maka ia pun menjawab seraya katanya, “Insya-Allah, seboleh(-boleh)nya/hamba tolonglah dan /hambalah menutup kemaluan tengku semua anak-beranak adik-beradik.” Kemudian baharulah berjanji janji Raja Sulaiman dengan opu-opu itu jika hasil maksudnya

yang opu-opu lima beradik (itu), salah seoranglah menjadi Yang Dipertuan Muda turun-temurun.” (1991:191)

The initial agreement was strongly sealed by the marriage between the two:

“Setelah selesai berjanji itu maka mengadap ia/Raja Sulaiman itu/kepada paduka//ayahanda//bagindanya//dipermaklumkan /segala/hal-ehwal maksudnya itu. Maka dikabulkan oleh ayahanda ikhtiar puteranya itu. Maka lalu/lah/dinikahkannya saudaranya Tengku Tengah itu dengan Opu Dahing Parani betapa adat istiadat raja-raja nikah kahwin.” (1991:191)

The authors have not only described the family trees and, the biological, social and political linkages/interactions between the Malay and Bugis rulers in the Malay world over the time; but, following the authors of the *Sejarah Melayu* and the *Hikayat Hang Tuah*, they have also included the arrangement or order (*‘peraturan’*) which determined and influenced the nature and history of Malay - Bugis rulership. This conventional theme which is fundamental to the development of power is explained below:

“Adapun yang aku perbuat ini sekadarkan hendak menyatakan peraturan yang jatuh pada perjalanan raja-raja Melayu dengan raja-raja (sebelah) Bugis, tatkala pada masa raja-raja sebelah Bugis dan raja-raja sebelah Pulau Perca, supaya mengetahui jalan dan sebab(nya) bercampur nasab (setengah atas setengahnya)” (1991: 128-9) [Underlining mine]

Just like the **Waat** or **Perjanjian Bukit Seguntang** (the covenant of Bukit Seguntang) between Tri Sri Buana and Demang Lebar Daun which governed the Malay

rulership of the Malacca dynasty described in the *Sejarah Melayu*, this '*peraturan*' or **sumpah setia** (loyalty oath) performs a similar function but with a slight difference.⁴ It constitutes the political agreement or moral and spiritual binding tie between the two rulers since the beginning of the sharing of power between Bugis and Malays, and operates as a mechanism for the foundation of their rule.

After the Bugis brothers were successful in helping Sultan Sulaiman, the son of Sultan Abdul Jalil, regain his throne, they agreed to elect Opu Kelana Jaya Putera or Opu Dahing Marewah as the first Yang Dipertuan Muda to rule the kingdom of Johor, Pahang and Riau and its territories (p.216). TN explains that it was Daing Marewah who initiated the **sumpah setia** between Malays and Bugis (p.157,217) as manifested in his '**aruk**' (oath/pledge during his coronation as YDM):

"Lihatlah Sultan Sulaiman Badr al- alam Syah, akulah Yang Dipertuan Muda yang memerintahkan kerajaanmu. Barang yang /aku/ tiada suka ((engkau)) membujur di hadapanmu, (maka) aku lintangkan, dan barang yang /aku/ tiada suka melintang di hadapanmu (maka) aku bujurkan. Barang yang semak (berduri) di hadapanmu, aku cucikan," demikianlah bunyi aruk(nya) itu." (1991:216)

This '**aruk**' expresses the symbiotic relationship between the Malay and Bugis rulers. Through this mechanism of power sharing between Malay and Bugis rulers, the country developed and became prosperous. The kingdom became a trading, economic and also religious centre. The kingdom expanded and with the help of Bugis courage and strength, especially under the rulership of Raja Haji, the power of the Bugis in the Malay

⁴ Matheson has made interesting comparative analysis of this **sumpah setia** and the covenant of Bukit Seguntang. (See Matheson 1991:78-79).

world was consolidated in fields of economics, religion, recreation and defence. These achievements are highlighted in the narrative and given long descriptions (see pages 388-390), an extract of which is included below:

"Syahadan kata sahib al-hikayat adalah pada masa Yang Dipertuan Muda Raja Haji (menjadi Yang Dipertuan Muda itu), mangkin ramai (dan bertambah ramainya negeri) Riau, serta (dengan) makmurnya serta (dengan) orang-orang (yang di dalam) Riau (itu banyaklah yang) kaya-kaya...Dan segala tuan-tuan syed pun banyaklah datang dari tanah Arab apalagi lebai Jawa hingga penuh tumpatlah di rumah wakaf dan masjid dan segenap surau orang besar-besar itu dan orang kaya-kaya itu. Apalagi malam jumaat berkumpullah ke dalam semuanya maulud nabi. Maka selesai daripada maulud memberi sedekah, ada yang kena jekketun, ada yang dapat ringgit, ada yang dapat rupiah. Dan lainnya daripada malam Jumaat itu beberapa pula permainan yang bermain seperti joget ada wayang. Dan beberepa pula penjajab perang yang sudah sedia di pelabuhan serta cukup (dengan) ubat pelurunya serta (dengan) panglima-panglimanya (dua) tiga puluh turun (dua) tiga puluh naik ke darat....demikianlah di dalam beberapa tahun bersuka-sukaan ((kerana)) negeri (pun) aman lagi makmur, makan-makanan pun murah dan segala orang-orang pun banyak untung..." (1991:388-9)

Under the rulership of Raja Haji, Bugis power expanded greatly and influenced other parts of the Malay world such as Selangor, Melaka, Perak, Kedah, Terengganu, Kelantan, Mempawah, Sanggau and Pontianak. In fact, during his rulership and due to his personal efforts, the Johor-Riau rulership became the model of power and life for Pontianak (refer to page 383 for description).

Raja Haji's heroic death is represented as the pinnacle of Bugis power, both physically and spiritually:

"Maka seketika ia mengamuk (itu) maka (matilah) ia (al-)syahid fi sabil Allah ketiganya dengan nama laki-laki...Maka Yang Dipertuan Muda ((Raja Haji)) pun bangkit menguhus badiknya sebelah tangan memegang Dala'il (al-)Khayrat. Maka dipeluk oleh beberapa orang maka di dalam tengah(-tengah hal) yang demikian itu maka Yang Dipertuan Muda Raja Haji pun kenalah peluru baris senapang baginda pun rebahlah/lalu/mangkat syahidlah ia.." (1991:413-4)

To reinforce Raja Haji's image as an ideal ruler, the authors surround his death with mythical mystery:

"Maka pada malam itu keluar(lah) memancar ke atas seperti (api)pancar ke atas / daripada peti (jenazah al-marhum) itu (Raja Haji). Maka gaduhlah orang-(orang) Melaka itu melihatkan hal itu. Maka di dalam tengah-tengah bergaduh(-gaduh) itu maka kapal yang akan membawa jenazah al-Marhum Raja Haji itu pun meletuplah terbakar terbang ke udara segala isinya serta orang / di dalam kapal itu/ seorang pun tiada yang lepas (mati semuanya. Syahadan /ber/kata kaul yang menuturkan itu tiadalah jadi dibawanya (jenazah al-Marhum Raja Haji itu) pindah ke negeri lain maka ditanamnya juga di Melaka (itu) hingga datang ambil dari (negeri) Riau (adanya). Syahadan kata kaul yang menutur(kan) sebab itulah digelar(nya) oleh Holanda-Holanda yang dahulu dengan nama Raja Api (intiha)." (1991:415-6)

The authors demonstrate repeatedly and explicitly, by giving numerous historical figures and events as examples, how this concept of **sumpah setia** (oath of loyalty) between

the Malay and Bugis rulers was critical to the survival of the kingdom and prosperity of the Malay and Bugis peoples. When the **sumpah setia** was dishonoured, the Sultanate disintegrated and the country fell into poverty and destruction.

“(Alkisah) maka tersebut(lah) perkataan (Baginda) Sultan Sulaiman di dalam (negeri) Riau, yang duduk dalam percintaan sebab perbuatan Raja Kecil Terengganu itu, dan negeri pun sudah sunyi, beras pun mahal(lah, hingga berharga seemas tiada penuh sapu tangan sirih). Dan kesakitanlah segala orang(-orang) miskin, rakyat-rakyat pun banyaklah kelaparan, (hingga setengah daripada setengahnya mengambil umbut setu di Pulau Bayan, dan ada yang mengambil umbut nibung dimakannya, apalagi merandau seperti keledak dan ubi (keladi) dengan beras. Maka iaitu kebanyakanlah nama perahu dagang, maka sebuah pun tiada masuk, maka sunyilah negeri Riau pada masa itu adanya). Syahadan setelah Baginda (Sulatan Sulaiman) melihat(kan) hal yang demikian itu, maka baginda pun memanggil paduka anakanda (Baginda) Raja di Baruh. (Maka Raja di Baruh pun mengadaplah paduka ayahanda baginda itu. Maka apabila berhadapan, maka titah baginda, “Awang baiklah engkau pergi ambikan (aku) Raja Muda (saudaramu) ke Linggi (itu), kerana jangan kita dimakan sumpah setia. Seperkara lagi negeri kita inilah rupanya (padahal negeri cukup dengan bendahara, temenggung, serta orang besar-besarnya, maka negeri pun mungkin sehari mungkin rosak, sebab perdagangan sudah mati, kacau oleh Wan Dalam itu, serta suku-suku/nya/kita Melayu).(Dan adapun suku-suku kita sebelah Melayu inilah/rupanya dan/macamnya, daripada dahulu sampai sekarang, tiadalah menyenangkan hati, hingga duduk di dalam kluatir saja, semata-mata seperti yang telah lalu hingga sekarang, hampir-hampir pergi dengan nyawa).” (1991:302) [Underlining mine]

Only when the **sumpah setia** was honoured by both parties, harmony would be preserved and the country would enjoy peace and prosperity:

"Maka tetaplah YDM Raja Jaafar (itu) memerintahkan negeri Riau sebagaimana adat (istiadat) purbakala dengan sumpah setianya. Dan Riau pun ramailah ..." (1991:487)

However, there were numerous *fitnahs* (a mixture of propaganda, malicious gossips and defamation), which led to internal strife which dishonoured the spirit of **sumpah setia**. Several times this had brought the country into chaos, poverty and destruction; thus illustrating cyclic developments of power in the Malay world. The series of conflicts had forced the Sultan to act firmly to restore and enforce the old *sumpah* for existing and future generations:

"Kemudian maka Sultan Sulaiman pun bertitah demikian/lah/ bunyinya, 'Barang tahu kiranya antara kedua pihak, sebelah suku-suku Melayu, dan sebelah suku-suku Bugis, adalah kita menetapkan sumpah setia antara Bugis(-Bugis) dengan Melayu, seperti setia (yang lama, iaitu setia) Marhum (yang Mangkat di)Sungai Baru, yang diperpegang hingga sampai kepada anak cucu/ dan / cicitnya. Barang siapa (antara kedua pihak) mungkir seperti yang telah tersebut ini, dibinasakan Allah/ dan rasulnya, maka kenalah kutuk dan laknat Allah atasnya/ tiada selamat dunia akhirat.'" (1991:305)

The pro-Bugis tone of the narrative has been observed earlier. In addition, the authors criticize the Malays categorically for being ungrateful and envious, and for scheming to tarnish the good image of Bugis rulers. They also put the blame for the problems and destruction suffered by the country on the shoulders of the Malays:

“Syahadan di dalam hal (yang demikian) itu maka kebanyakan suku-suku Melayu tiada (juga) menerima syukur (kecuali setengah atas setengahnya) hingga menaruh dendam (khusmat) juga di dalam hatinya akan raja Bugis, dengan beberapa jenis perbuatan dan kelakuan(nya) hendak mencarikan juga nama Yang Dipertuan Muda serta Bugis biar mendapat nama (yang) buruk” (1991:390)

Besides describing how the **sumpah setia** the basis of the system of power had been threatened and violated by the Malays, the text also describes other factors which acted as threats to the symbiosis of power. These are: the betrayal of another Buginese ruler, Daing Menompok (Raja Tua) in favour of the Malays and Dutch (see pages 421-3); Dutch and British intervention or colonialism ; the problems of piracy; deviantionist religious teaching (story of Lebai Tamat); and the bad personalities of the rulers (for examples Raja Kecik of Siak and Sultan Mahmud Muzaffar Syah of Lingga) who violated religious instructions and traditions.

Dutch interference in internal affairs is perceived as a strong factor which threatened the symbiotic power and more significantly had reduced Bugis strength in Malay world. However, it is treated as ‘*zahir*’, an external or secondary cause, compared to the former (the *sumpah setia*) which is ‘*batin*’ (internal) or primary to the power structure of the rulers:

“Alkisah maka tersebut(lah) perkataan (Baginda) Sultan Mahmud. Apabila baginda (itu) sudah tetap di dalam /negeri/ Lingga maka tiap-tiap hari di dalam kesusahan (juga), kerana segala anak raja Melayu dan Bugis sudah bertaburan ke sana ke mari. (Ada yang ke Terengganu, ada yang ke Pahang, ada yang ke Kelantan, ada yang berbuat tempat di

Selat Bulang) mencari rezekinya pun tidak ketentuan, melainkan kebanyakan merompak jugalah yang /betul yang/ boleh lekas mendapat rezeki. Maka di dalam hal itu (maka) baginda pun (hendak) berangkat ke Terengganu (akan) hendak minta/tolong/bicarakan kepada Yang Dipertuan Terengganu memperbaiki negeri Johor dan Riau yang sudah dirosakkan oleh Kompeni Belanda (itu) pada zahirnya. Dan pada batinnya semuanya fitnah itu daripada Yang Dipertuan Terengganu juga datangnya seperti (yang telah) tersebut pada perang Linggi dan perang Riau. " (1991:434-5)

After the period of YDM Raja Haji, the narrative also describes several historical stages of Johor-Riau ruler in which the country became prosperous under several other models of Bugis power such as YDM Raja Jaafar, YDM Raja Ali and YDM Raja Abdullah; and also under a model of Malay power, Sultan Abd Rahman Syah. Only under the rulership of YDM Raja Jaafar and Sultan Abd Rahman, the 'true' model of the symbiosis of Malay-Bugis power was achieved and thus illustrated. The rest of the Malay rulers are only presented as the negative examples or counter-models of power, as shown by the descriptions of the lives of Raja Kecik of Siak and Sultan Mahmud Muzaffar Syah of Lingga.

Self in Power Structure

The narrative also focuses on the authors' own roles and positions within the framework of the power structure described from Section 3.5 onwards, for Raja Ahmad was born in 1773 during YDM Raja Haji's period, and therefore enjoyed the prosperity under his rule in Riau (p.388). Raja Ahmad and Raja Ali were involved in administration and also participated in major political activities such as the Riau's embassy to Batavia. The

descriptions of their personal experiences in Batavia, and historical pilgrimage and journey to Mekah, are meant to enhance the positive image of Bugis spiritual power. In addition to the roles and examples from the YDMs of Riau, Raja Ahmad and his son, Raja Ali Haji, played significant roles in the development of power in Riau-Lingga, and provided positive role models in the narrative.

The narrative thus concludes with a brief description of the state of affairs at the time of writing of the text, describing the state of tranquility and stability of power in the Malay world during the period. The text ends with an invitation to the audience of the text to improve upon it which actually signifies the authors' self-awareness of the limitations of their own power with respect to creation/writing, and at the same time it expresses hopes for unlimited human power in order to achieve betterment of life. On the other hand, it could also reflect supreme confidence in the accuracy and rightness of what has been put to paper. It could be read as an arrogant challenge to prove that what is written down is wrong, or to do it better. The author's humility, therefore, could be interpreted as an inverted form of snobbery.

Except maybe for its last two parts, the compositional structure of the text is very much similar to the *Sejarah Melayu* which demonstrates clearly the rise and fall of power according to the nature of rule. A more significant similarity is the use of '*sumpah setia*' and '*aruk*' which reminds us of the '*Waat Bukit Seguntang*' (the covenant of Bukit Seguntang) between Tri Sri Buana and Demang Lebar Daun. The authors of TN were aware that the question of loyalty was of prime concern to their audience and could not be ignored at all, in fact, it had to be raised with a new favourable interpretation to convince

the Malay readers on the importance of recognising the Bugis role in the development of the kingdom. This is especially so when two other earlier texts, the **Siak Chronicles** and the **Peringatan Sejarah Negeri Johor**, had given their own interpretation of this notion of loyalty in defence of their own interest groups, the Minangkabaus and the Johor Malays.

Peringatan Sejarah Negeri Johor describes this theme:

“Adapun persetiaan dahulu kala kepada / Paduka Kakanda Marhum Hassan Shah itu baginda Sultan Kampar dengan Paduka Marhum yang berempat di Gunung Sailan / pada masa Seri Sultan Alauddin Shah /itu/ (ayah) baginda Sultan Abdul Jalil Shah mudik ke Gunung Sailan, / tatkala itulah baginda mupakat, maka tanah Gunung Sailan itu diberikan oleh Paduka Marhum Sultan Alauddin / Shah kepada ayahanda baginda Sultan Kisna Shah. Dimulai pula setia oleh baginda dengan anakda baginda serta / sumpah setia adalah: segala anak Minangkabau yang di laut dan duduk di dalam telu’ rantau Johor tiadalah ia bertuan / kepada yang lain hanyalah kepada anak chuchu baginda yang di Johor. Itulah tuannya dan jikalau dilaluinya sumpah setia ini / oleh anak Minangkabau yang dilaut barang dimakan oleh Besi Kawi dan kutu’ kalam Allah mereka itu. Dan durhakalah mereka itu ke Pagar Ruyung dan ke Gunung Sailan dan ke Johor dan /sah dan/ (barang)jangan / selamat tiap2 suatu pekerjaannya dan barang chitanya jangan diperolehnya. Persetiaan kepada /zaman dahulu kala hingga datang sekarang ini kepada ba’da Paduka Chunda dan Paduka Nenda/ pun demikian juga tiada berubah.” (Kratz 1973:50)

Peringatan, which gives the Johor Malays’ interpretation of loyalty follows more closely the original version of *Waat Bukit Seguntang*, but gives more honour to the Malays

than the Minangkabaus. On the other hand, *Tuhfat* gives equal power and honour to the Buginese by its *sumpah setia* and emphasis on the symbiosis of power between them and the Malays. By this counter interpretation of the conventional theme of loyalty, the authors of *Tuhfat* have not only legitimized the Buginese intervention in the Malay world, but have shrewdly and subtly put the Buginese in a higher position of power and honour than the Minangkabau people, their main rivals. By their subtle treatment of the conventional theme of loyalty, the authors want to deny and reject all the power claims made in the earlier narratives.

To appreciate the authors' great literary skills in discussing the theme of the narrative, we need to see their concept of authorship as manifested in the text itself.

Concept of Beauty and authorship

The authors have a specific notion of beauty in writing. This is manifested in the following statement:

"Syahadan di belakang ini kelak siapa-siapa daripada anak cucuku hendak mengubungnya siarah ini patutlah, akan tetapi/nya/ dengan jalan yang patut dan dengan ibarat perkataan wadih dan sahih serta aturan yang patut serta benar, supaya terpakai.."

(1991:654) [Underlining mine]

Even though the statement refers to 'future' writers, it describes three criteria of 'good writing' highly valued and aimed at by the authors themselves:

- i. *Sahih* (Truth)
- ii. *Patut* (Propriety)
- iii. *Wadih* (Clarity)

Besides manifesting the authors' idealism, it is also stating that what they have written is true, proper and clear.

Concept of Sahih (Truth)

The authors believe that the main duty and role of an author is to write true words (perkataan sahih) or tell the truth. Therefore they invite their readers to add to and improve the text:

"melainkan siapa-siapa/pula/yang dapat/ di belakang (akulah) daripada anak cucu/nya maka/ aku harapkan menambah karangan aku ini jika dapat" (1991:156)

The text in a true sense does not belong to a particular author as it is responsibility and duty of all to reveal and to know the truth (*sahih*). In order to tell the truth(*sahih*) and produce a valid account (*sah*), an author is required to do some research before embarking on writing. Incomplete historical work without important information (such as dates of events, sources of information) and even untidy presentation is strongly criticised:

"Syahadan akan tetapinya aku terjumpa dengan satu syejarah dan siarah Siak itu, ((akan tetapi sejarah Siak itu)) daripada awal hingga akhirnya, tiada tahun dan tiada tawarikh, apalagi bulannya dan harinya tiada sekali-kali aku bertemu, dan suratan pun terlalu kopi/nya/, karangannya pun banyak kurang sedap dibaca, sebab sudah banyak berpindah-pindah agaknya daripada tangan seorang kepada tangan seorang serta yang menyurat/nya/ pun kurang selidik pada menghasilkannya bagi sah, demikianlah sangkaku..." (1991:274)

This criticism not only explains the authors' attitude and approach towards their own work, more than that it manifests how they have resorted to and capitalized on this factor to attack and undermine the above text. By condemning the weaknesses of the *Siarah Siak* or *Siak Chronicle* based on the absence of scholastic criteria, the authors have dismissed the entire work as being of little value and thus subtly refuted its claims for Raja Kecil as the legitimate founder of Siak dynasty and his rightful conquest of the kingdom.

The authors also believe in the importance of logic and good reasoning as a source of knowledge. Though they have referred to various sources of information, they also emphasize the need to accept ('*taslimkan*') sources which are strong and valid to derive the truth:

"...Demikianlah/itu/ jualah anak cucu nabi Allah Sulaiman (alihi al-sallam), jatuh ke tanah Bugis itu. Fa al-hasil tiap-tiap pekerjaan yang tiada kita dapat akan hakikatnya janganlah kita dustakan, hendaklah kita taslimkan, kerana dalil/nya / berdiri. (1991:151)

[Underlining mine]

This could explain why the authors are selective and why some of the accounts of history in the text do not tally with the original sources referred to by the authors (Andaya 1975; Matheson 1982). In this context, the authors are convinced that the sources did not represent the truth and it is only proper (patut) to give their own interpretation if their own judgement or reasoning of the events is better or more convincing (*dalilnya berdiri*). Maybe this is how Raja Ali Haji's saw his role when he expanded and edited the short version of the text written by his father. He was guided by the principle that the exposition of truth is

the joint responsibility of all human beings/authors, and not an isolated duty of an individual.

But if the authors have doubts over an issue, these doubts could be expressed and be made known to readers:

"Adapun (bicara itu tiadalah aku dapat akan surat-suratnya, maka taukiflah akan menyatakan dia...". (1991:424)

"Syahadan adalah yang dua kaul itu (wa''Llahu a'lam), entahkan yang mana-mana terlebih sah" (1991:177)

"di dalam pada itu pun ada lebih kurang sedikit daripada naskhahnya. Maka tiadalah hamba tahu kerana hamba mendengar daripada mulut Raja Abdullah Engku Haji Muda sendiri bukannya menyalin naskhahnya." (1991:628) [Underlining mine]

Concept of Patut (Proper)

Another criteria of good writing is 'patut'. 'Patut' refers to proper narrative content as well as its styles of presentation. The authors believe in moral and ethical responsibility in writing. A piece of writing is not only written for truth, but also to uphold proper and accepted religious and ethical values and traditions. The notion of 'patut' or what is proper in writing is based on two systems of values: 'adat' (Malay traditions) and 'Islam'. The old traditions and Islamic perspective have been discussed before (Andaya and Matheson, 1982, 1991). Tuhfat al-Nafis, according to them, presents 'a view of Malay history in terms of Muslim ethics' (1982:127-8). The author, Raja Ali Haji, is described as 'a Malay intent

on preserving the old traditions and a devout Muslim anxious about the condition of the Muslim community' (1982:115) or *'tokoh mengekal etos dan budaya serta leluhur tempatan'* (Muhd Yusoff Hashim 1992:516). Raja Ali Haji and Raja Ahmad are the first Malay-Bugis writers who applied the concept of Islamic historiography as formulated by al-Ghazali, the well-known scholar of Islam. What concerns us here is how the Islamic historiography and Malay conventions influenced the narrative or the styles of writing of the authors, especially in their modes of self expression.

The authors' system of values or religious philosophy not only determined their concept of truth (Sahih) or narrative content but also narrative styles of expression. Being ardent believers of old traditions (adat and religion), they also tried to express their views within accepted cultural and religious forms of expression, and at the same time act as preservers or implementators of those values. Even though the text is a unique personal account of Malay history, it was written or conveyed within socially or culturally accepted norms of expression.

There are various narrative styles or techniques used by the authors to make evaluations and criticisms:

- i. Direct speech/statements/comments
- ii. Self-restrained, indirect and passing remarks
- iii. Open to readers/reader response
- iv. By dialogue or 'mouth of others'
- v. Literary expressions: analogy, pantuns
- vi. Religious quotations

The authors are very direct and vocal in criticising the reactions and actions of the Malays in the power struggle between Malay and Bugis rulers, and show their support for the Bugis side. Even though they are conscious of their responsibility as writers to give an objective or 'sahih' account by giving all the facts and perspectives of the events, they still pronounce their judgement on these events.

Multi-Focus Technique

According to Andaya, the Kingdom of Johor was effectively partitioned in 1719 into three loci of power: Terengganu and Pahang under Sultan Abdul Jalil of Johor; Siak, Bengkalis, and Batu Bahara under Raja Kecil; and Selangor, Kelang, and Linggi under Daing Marewa and Daing Menompok (1975:285). After the Bugis conquest of Riau and the installation of Sultan Sulaiman in 1722, the power struggles in the new Kingdom of Johor were then among three major groups: the Malays, the Buginese and Raja Kecil of Siak; and between two different Buginese loci of power, the two rival Buginese groups (Raja Muda or Yang Dipertuan Muda and Raja Tua).

The narrative describes these power struggles, but pays particular attention to the conflict between the Malays and Buginese. It provides different points of views from the three parties involved: the Siak-Malays, the Buginese and Sultan Sulaiman, who was trapped in the middle of the struggle.

On the Malay perspective they write:

"Syahadan dalah ambilan pada hati mereka itu yg zahirnya, (pada kelakuannya), adalah segala Bugis-Bugis orang baharu mendatang dengan hal yang demikian itu, (maka

baginda) Sulaiman menyerahkan (memerintahkannya) kerajaannya dengan mutlak, menjadi Yang Dipertuan Muda dan segala menteri hulubalang yang besar-besar di bawah perintahnya. Pada hal orang besar seperti hulubalang dan temenggung, iaitu menteri yg sedia memang, maka dikurangkan kuasanya daripada orang yang baharu datang. Maka itulah menjadi mengambil timu-timu kebenaran (dari) sebelah Melayu.” (1991:269)

According to TN, the Malays regarded the Sultan's action as unfair, for it took over the rights and reduced the power of the Malay rulers. But to Sultan Sulaiman his action was justified, for his Malay family only condemned and humiliated him when he was in trouble and only the Bugis helped him regain his throne and saved him from humiliation:

“Syahadan (adapun baginda) Sultan Sulaiman itu pada ambilan(nya) di dalam hatinya, yang zahir pada perbuatannya, adalah kerajaan ayahandanya dan kerajaan dirinya pun sudah hilang diambil oleh Raja Kecil Siak, serta (pula sudah) dibunuh (ayahandanya) oleh Raja Kecil diambil kerajaannya, dan dihinakannya anaknya diperbuat(nya) penjawat dan (lainnya, dan Johor pada segala takluk daerahnya di dalam tangan Raja Kecil sudah terlepas kerajaan Johor kepada tangan Raja Kecil, dan) sudah ia bernobat (di dalam) Johor. Maka di dalam hal ini ada(lah) kira-kira tiga tahun lamanya, maka tiada/seseorang/sanak saudaranya daripada raja-raja Melayu, seperti Patani, dan Kelantan dan Terengganu, menolong mengambil akan kerajaannya (semula) daripada tangan Raja Kecil itu. Melainkan yang ada daripada segala sanak-sanak saudaranya(itu, semata-mata) menghinakan dia, hingga mengata ((setengah daripada)) setengahnya Sultan Sulaiman itu tiada patut menjadi raja sebab maknya itu orang kecil, iaitu orang Aceh Pedir namanya Nusamah, ditukar(kan) dengan tudung periuk emas satu. Dan (ada pula setengah daripada sanak saudaranya mengatakan Sultan Sulaiman itu tiada patut menjadi raja sebab

maknya anak si pemicit, dan) banyak lagi perkataan yang lain-lain(yang macam-macam), sekira-kira putus asalah ia daripada mendapat kerajaan, dan putus asalah ia daripada pertolongan sanak saudaranya, maka putuslah ijtihadnya yang demikian itu. Maka itulah sebab(nya) ia minta pertolongan daripada raja Bugis opu-opu yang (ber)lima beradik itu. Syahadan apabila datanglah (Bugis) opu-opu (yang lima beradik) itu, maka sampailah segala maksudnya, dan berbalas(lah) kematian ayahandanya, maka dapat(lah) ia kerajaan Johor kepada tangannya, dan susah(lah) seterusnya dan sanak saudaranya hendak mendatangkan kejahatan atasnya, dengan beberapa kali (susah) lelah berperang dan beberapa/lagi pula/ susah meramaikan negeri (memeriksa laut-laut teluk rantau tokong pulau jajahan daerah Johor). Kemudian maka tetaplah kerajaannya pulang seperti (darjatnya) ayahanda (bagindanya). Maka tiada(lah) lain balasnya melainkan itulah sahaja seperti yang telah dilakukannya itu, dan itu pun muafakat juga dengan bendahara, dan temenggung, dan segala orang (besar-besarnya). Pada permulaan hendak mengangkat (kan) Yang Dipertuan Muda pihak Bugis itu dengan suka ria juga, tiba-tiba sudah (jadi) begini, dan sudah menjadi darah daging (dan bercampur-baur menjadi ipar duai dan menjadi sanak saudara Bugis itu), serta negeri (sudah) ramai pulang sediakala baik pekerjaan dan lainnya. Maka baharulah sanak-sanak yang (lain-lain) sebelah Melayu hendak menghilangkan jasa budi orang khususnya pula sudah bersumpah (dan ber)setia sebelah-menyebelah. (Maka adakah harus dibatalkan pada segala tersebut itu? Maka iaitu ((tiada)) harus!... " (1991:269-270) [Underlining mine]

On the Bugis part, the description given is:

"Syahadan adapun (akan) pegangan (dan ambilan sebelah) Bugis, adalah ia semua dipanggil (oleh) Sultan Sulaiman tatkala belum ia menjadi Sultan, minta tolong

menghapuskan kemaluannya dan minta pulangkan/akan/kebesarannya dan (kerajaannya serta) minta lawankan musuh (seteru)nya. Maka sudah kita semua sampaikan maksudnya dan hajatnya (dan yang) berganda-ganda. Kemudian Sultan Sulaiman serta suku-suku(nya) sebelah Melayu hendak membalas jasa dan budi kita semua Bugis, akan balas yang sepatutnya, dengan bangsa kita dan nama kita. Maka kita terimalah itu pun dengan beberapa kali kita tolak, tiada/mau/terima kehendaknya. Maka tiada juga suku-suku Melayu (itu) melepaskan seperti yang tersebut (itu pada) masa kita dipilih hendak dijadikan Yang Dipertuan Muda itu. Maka sekarang (sudah)jadi (begini saudara) daging(nya) (sudah menjadi kasih sayang kita), dan anak cucu kita sudah menjadi anak cucu(nya). ((Maka)) waktu (yang) begini pula baharu hendak ditolong(kan) kita semua Bugis, serta hendak dirosakkan (pula kita) sumpah setia (kita semua), serta hendak diberi malu (pula) kita dengan dibatalkan /perjanjian dan/ pula jabatan kita selama-lamanya ini. Maka (iaitu pekerjaan tiada harus) Dalam pada itu pun jikalau Sultan Sulaiman hendak menyertai pekerjaan sebelah suku-suku (ia sebelah) Melayu itu, (maka) iaitu kita lawan dahulu pada jalan yang patut, atau undur dahulu kita (pada tempat yang patut). Adapun yang lain daripada (Baginda) Sultan Sulaiman, boleh kita cuba laki-lakinya, baik suku(-sukunya) sebelah Siak, atau (sebelah) Pahang, atau (sebelah) Terengganu, atau (sebelah) Kelantan, boleh juga (kita) cuba laki-lakinya. Syahadan inilah ambilan (dan pegangan) Bugis(-Bugis)/ semua/." (1991:270-1) [Underlining mine]

This multi-focus technique is very interesting for it provides opportunity for readers to view the core issue or the rationale of actions from the different angles and perspectives of the characters or parties involved. This innovative narrative approach gives greater

insight into the psychology and inner elements which shaped the thoughts and actions of the characters or the groups represented, and adds more to the narrative impact or force.

However, through additional remarks such as '*tiada harus*' applied to the Malays and the Sultan, the authors have shown their support for the Buginese but criticized the Malays and the defiant Sultan Sulaiman. The Sultan had attempted to flee and rescue his family from Riau and had attacked the Buginese in Riau because he could no longer bear the affronts and brutalities he had to suffer under them. He had even informed the Dutch in Malacca of his differences with all the Buginese on Riau and had asked to be rescued from his enemies (Andaya 1975:394). Thus, he also became the subtle target of criticism by the authors for not being willing to give the total royal support and blessing needed by the Buginese.

When Riau was in a state of destruction caused by the conflict, the authors put the blame on the Malays and used strong adjectives to describe them:

"Syahadan di dalam hal (yang demikian) itu maka kebanyakan suku-suku Melayu tiada (juga) menerima syukur (kecuali setengah as setengahnya) hingga menaruh dendam (khusmat) juga di dalam hatinya akan raja Bugis, dengan beberapa jenis perbuatan dan kelakuan(nya) hendak mencarikan juga nama Yang Dipertuan Muda serta Bugis biar mendapat nama (yang) buruk." (1991:390) [Underlining mine]

The authors also criticised strongly the people of Siak, the enemies of Buginese. However this is done through the 'mouths of others' in the form of dialogue. For example, on Raja Kecil, the ruler of Siak, they comment:

“(Maka) apabila tiba (ke Riau maka) dimaklumkannyalah (seperti) maksud (Yamtuan) Raja Ismail itu kepada (duli) Yang Dipertuan (Muda pun) menjawab/katanya, ‘Kami tiada percaya punggawa perkataan raja Siak itu, kerana selalu mungkir lagi penipu, selangkan datuknya Raja Kecil beberapa kali sudah bersumpah di dalam masjid, lagikan mungkir juga (ia). Ini pula cucunya.’” (1991:335) [Underlining mine]

In fact, rather shockingly, they use improper four-letter words of condemnation to describe the Siak people who assisted Terengganu in fighting against Kelantan:

“Syahadan tersebut di dalam siarah Siak apabila orang Kelantan melihat orang Siak mara membabi buta itu, serta dilihatnya kena peluru tiada luka maka kata orang Kelantan, ‘Orang Siak jangan masuk, biar orang Terengganu saja kerana orang Siak tiada dimakan besi. Puki maknya orang Siak! Kita membedil dia seperti membedil hantu bukannya orang.’” (1991:362-3) [Underlining mine]

By using the mouths of others, the authors intended to cover themselves for using such four-letter words. Still, we find it rather in contrast with their statement about the concept of propriety from *adat* and Islamic perspectives.

After the Minangkabau conquest of Johor, Sultan Abdul Jalil fled to Terengganu and tried to reestablish his new capital there (Andaya 1975:286). The Malays of Trengganu supported him, his family and the Johor Malays in their plight against the Buginese and the Minangkabaus. When the Buginese began to accrue more and more benefits commensurate with their power and influence within the Kingdom, and as Sultan Sulaiman became more dependent upon the Buginese leaders in the Kingdom, the Malay Orang kaya grew resentful

and began abandoning the court and seeking refuge with other Malay leaders in Pahang and Terengganu. These two areas, especially the latter, became a major source of Malay opposition to the Buginese within the Kingdom of Riau-Johor throughout most of the eighteenth century (Andaya 1975:322).

Therefore, besides Raja Kecil, the ruler of Siak, the criticism of the ruler of Trengganu is also strong, even though expressed through the 'mouths of others', this time through the mouths of the Dutch:

"Setelah Pemberam mendengar surat Yang Dipertuan Trengganu itu, maka ia tertawa serta mengangguk (-angguk) kepalanya sambil katanya, 'Terlebih baik kita percaya (kepada) Bugis yang melawan kita perang ini, daripada kita percaya/kan/ kepada raja Terengganu yang tidak melawan kita perang'" (1991:444)

Another sharp criticism is conveyed in an episode covering the arrival of the ruler of Riau, the Yang Dipertuan Muda, in Trengganu to bring back Sultan Abdul Rahman to be installed as the new king of Lingga. He came in a Dutch war ship and upon arrival, the ship fired its cannons and gave the proper respectful salute to the ship and ruler of Trengganu, but they were not properly welcomed by them in return. TN attacks Terengganu's ruler as lacking social decorum by giving a commentary from the eyes of a westerner in the following episode:

"Syahadan kata sahib al-hikayat adalah Tengku Besar turun (ke keci) itu tiada berbaju, jadi segala hopsir-hipsir itu bertanya perlahan-lahan (kepada anak raja-raja yang ada di bawah geladak kecil itu, kerana ada satu hopsir yang dires sebab melawan kernilnya berkelahi jadilah ditutupnya oleh kernil hingga sampai ke Terengganu namanya

Deman, iaitu yang bertanya) katanya, 'Apa sebab itu raja tiada memakai baju tiada hormat kepada tuan kernil nanti tentu tuan kernil balas tidak hormat pula.' Syahdan seketika lagi Tengku Besar pun hendak balik ke darat maka kernil pun menyuruh dikeluarkan ubat meriam (yang sudah diisi) itu, jadi tiada(lah) Tengku Besar itu dapat hormat pulang." (1991:530)

Another criticism from the eyes and mouths of others is the description of the Dutch letter from Piter Jakub Pemberam which strongly condemned the ruler of Terengganu:

"sangatlah kasar(nya) perkataannya itu, serta dengan tempelak ((dan bangkitnya)) dan cercanya...dan beberapa lagi perkataan yang keji-keji yang tiada harus disuratkan pada siarah ini..." (1991:444-5)

The authors believe that the truth, however bad, needs to be revealed as this constitutes a good lesson for the benefit of future generations. But an author must do it in a manner acceptable to religion (*diharuskan*). Direct methods would be too harsh and not effective, and would affect the beauty (*kuranglah indah*); therefore more subtle ways of expression are suggested:

"(kerana pekerjaan yang sudah lalu, maşanya perbuatan / yang sudah lepas/ orang tua-tua sama orang tua-tua. Maka kuranglah indahnya kita bukakan dengan sarih perkataan memadailah dengan kinayat perkataan sekira-kira boleh jadi peringatan dan menjadi tawarikh pada orang yang di belakangnya. Maka pekerjaan itu diharuskan akan tetapinya kita semua yang di belakangnya hendaklah mendoakan antara kedua pihak." (1991:444-5)

In contrast to their criticisms of Siak and Terengganu, their criticisms of the behaviour of Sultan Mahmud are rather restrained and reflect more an awareness of the cultural and religious prohibition on the humiliation of others. It shows, at least in this context, how the authors have made an attempt to channel their critical views within the framework of such values. This is done by leaving actual descriptionw to the audience's imagination:

"Syahadan apabila Sultan Mahmud mendengar jawab residen (demikian) itu, mangkin bertambah-tambahlah (marahnya). Maka banyaklah perkataan tiada baik, (maka tiadalah hamba suratkan pada siarah ini memadailah pada orang yang berakal memikirkan perkataan orang yang berselisih antara keduanya pihak)." (1991:624) [Underlining mine]

Sultan Mahmud was mainly the Bugis ally in the power struggle between the Bugis and the Malay rulers. Thus, The authors show sympathy and are forgiving in their judgement of Sultan Mahmud and treat his wrongdoings as individual weaknesses, compared to the 'crime' done by the Siak and Trengganu people in scheming and plotting against the Bugis. The *Sultan* is described as a young and impressionable ruler, and the description given, though direct, is too general in view of his behaviour:

"Di dalam hal itu tiada juga baginda itu mengendahkan (hingga) bermain(-main) juga ia di (dalam negeri) Singapura (itu) berjalan ke sana ke mari (pada tempat yang patut dan kepada tempat yang tiada patut, yang menyalahi pada adat istiadat perjalanan raja-raja).....Maka Raja Ali (tiadalah) membenarkan ((pekerjaan baginda itu ((kerana banyak didapatnya khabar-khabar baginda itu. Jika ia ke Singapura mendapat)) pekerjaan yang kurang patut dan kurang indah kepada (nama) raja-raja. Lebih-lebih maklumlah Sultan mahmud itu orang muda ((dan)) yang bersama-sama dengan dia (itu) pun budak-budak

(dan juak-juaknya)/ yang muda-muda/juga (yang) tiada tahukan adat istiadat yang mengurangkan nama kerajaan, sebab itulah kurang perkenan Raja Ali itu akan (Baginda) Sultan Mahmud itu selalu (amat) bermain-main ke Singapura.” (1991:598-9) [Underlining mine]

“maka tiada pula suka amat mendengar nasihat /dan/ajaran orang tua-tua, serta mengikutkan hawa nafsu/nya akan dirinya serta juak-juaknya yang muda-muda. Maka dengan kerana sebab inilah (jadi) pokok bersalahan faham adanya..” (1991:600) [Underlining mine]

This is rather gentle and mild compared to the harsh descriptions and criticisms of Abdullah of Sultan Hussein Syah of Singapore (discussed in Chapter 8). Abdullah has strong notions of self-righteousness based on rather simplistic moral judgements and this influenced his sharp and intolerant criticisms. On the other hand, Raja Ahmad and Raja Haji, even though they have very strong convictions with respect to religion and truth, display a more cautious attitude and convey their judgements subtly. Following the common religious believe on human errors or weaknesses, they have expressed similar view that it is better for God to make final judgement.

The Literary Device - *Kinayat Perkataan* (Literary Expressions)

In the authors' conscious attempts to conform to the religious and cultural values held, they also use '*kinayat perkataan*', *sindiran* (indirect reference) or literary expressions, in the forms of analogy and symbolism for their narration (see Appendix 3 for the list of analogies and symbolism used). Considering the length of the text, the analogies used are rather

limited; however the authors have created effective expressions to describe the events. For example, to describe the way the Dutch humiliated the ruler of Trengganu, “susu and anjing” is used:

“Allah! Allah! (Tuhan)! beberapa macam bangkitannya Holanda itu serta (dengan) kata nistanya akan Yang Dipertuan Terengganu itu buruk baiknya. Jikalau sekiranya (dicara martabat orang-orang kita di sini tiadalah cakap mengatakan perkataan yang demikian itu. Jikalau sekiranya kepada bahasa Melayu diremas susu itu dengan segera diberi/kan/ (makan) (kepada) anjing tidaklah terjilat olehnya” (1991:446) [Underlining mine]

Another good expression is ‘*pinggan dan perahu*’ to describe the conflict between Malay and Bugis:

“Di dalam hal itu banyaklah fitnah-fitnah khabar-khabar daripada pihak suku-suku Melayu dan suku-suku Bugis seumpama pinggan mangkuk di dalam petak perahu kena gelombang bersenggitalah dan berhentak-hentak/kan/ mangkin sehari mangkin banyak sumbingnya..” (1991:459)

The text also uses traditional schematic or formulaic expressions, especially in the long versions, which also manifests its literary grammar (Matheson, 1991:24). Close analysis of the two versions indicates that Raja Ali Haji edited the short version to help readers to read and understand the text better. This criteria of clarity is one of the functions and objectives of his writing, as shall be discussed later.

The authors also include pantuns, the traditional poetic form, in their narrative. But in this context too, the use is surprisingly low. In fact only three pantuns are found in the whole text (see 1991: 211,318). To describe the Bugis ruler's feeling after they had to pay the debt of the Malay rulers to the Dutch, the following pantun was recited:

Tinggi bukit Sukadana

tempat bertanam hali padi

sakitnya muda kena bencana

sebarang kerja tidak menjadi

(1991:318)

The concept of '*Patut*' or proper is enhanced in the authors' treatments of narrative characters or personalities mentioned. Their strong religious values shaped the characterisation of the text. The authors have a clear preference or personal bias for the charismatic and religious Buginese rulers and against the more 'worldly' Malay rulers for following own desires and lusts (*hawa nafsu*), and who are described as envious, materialistic and untrustworthy. The Buginese rulers are therefore positive role models and the Malay rulers are their counter bad models. The treatment or descriptions of these rulers, even though they focus on individual historical figures, are rather stereotyped and simplistic.

Maybe their treatment of other 'foreign' characters such as Europeans are more balanced and interesting. Even though these figures were included in the framework of the text and at first glance seemed to form part of Riau history and world without any moral evaluation by the authors (Matheson 1991:75-6), they are actually given more 'individual'

treatment rather than fixed stereotyping. Therefore, in short narrative passages we can remember certain colourful European figures such as '*satu muda cerdek namanya Anggelbek*' (1991:538), Dutch envoy to Riau; Piter Jakub Pemberam whos '*sangatlah kasar(nya) perkataanya*' (1991:444); Abran Rudi, Dutch representative/wakil kompeni in Riau who was '*keras perintahnya*' (1991:425); Kersaji '*orang kafir Majusi*' (1991:626), a close friend of Sultan Mahmud; Deman, the outspoken ship officer (1991:530); the shocked/confused raja laut on seeing the crying Sultan (1991:534); the scheming and provocative Major Farquhar (1991:500); and efficient Dutch advisor, Adriang Kuk (1991:502).

In general, the attitude of authors towards westernisation is rather neutral, and the description on the Governor-General's palace in Batavia is very objective and there is no indication of any condescending tone or anti-western elements (as interpreted and quoted by Iskandar and Taib Osman in Chapter 1). In fact, there are few instances in which the authors have praised the actions of Bugis rulers, such as YDM Raja Jaafar, for their close contact with the Europeans:

"(Syahadan) kata sahib al-hikayat adalah Yang Dipertuan Muda Raja Jaafar itu satu raja yang baik perangainya (jua) dan suka mengasihi sanak(-sanak) saudaranya dan sahabat handai....Dan adalah ia suka utus-mengutus ke sebuah negeri yang lain-lain dengan hadiah-hadiah serta suka mencari sahabat-sahabat daripada orang baik-baik). Syahadan (maka) banyaklah daripada orang Islam dan orang putih, istimewa pula di dalam negeri Melaka (dan) seperti gebenurnya dan residen dan saudagar-saudagarnya....(Dan orang yang mengajar pun demikian juga orang putih juga. (Dan) adalah ia menyuruh budak-budak empat lima orang belajar muzik cara Holanda ke Melaka iaitu belajar tambur

dan seruling dan trompet dan biola dan lainnya daripada segala perkakas bermain muzik.”
(1991:497-8) [Underlining mine]

They also praise Yang Dipertuan Muda Raja Ali, who was was religious and yet very close to the Dutch and foreigners:

“Dan demikian lagi YDM Raja Ali inilah bencikan orang bermain-main yang membawa kepada cabul laki-laki dengan perempuan.....dengan bicara yg baik sertalah musyawarah yang /baik dan yang / patut dengan residen Riau serta saudaranya.”
(1991:611-2)

The text gives more balanced treatment of westerners and westernisation, and not all that comes from the west is rejected. A good relationship with the west and westerners is considered important for the development of the country. Only elements which are threatening to Islamic belief (*itikad*) are condemned by the authors. This attitude is reflected in their description of the westernised way of life of Sultan Mahmud of Lingga:

“Kemudian berangkatlah pula (ia) ke Singapura bermain-main. Maka lalu(lah) masuk (satu) itikad kemuafakatan orang-orang Nasari yang bernama Permisyun, dan bersahabatlah ia dengan satu orang Parsi yang bernama Kersaji, bukannya Parsi yang Islam(nya). Kemudian daripada itu ianya balik ke Lingga berbuat istana seperti rumah ((orang)) putih.....Dan beberapa pula anjing-anjing yang besar-besar ditaruh di situ dengan (di)peliharanya seperti adat (pemeliharaan) orang putih jua adanya (intiha mulakkhasan). /Adapun rumah seperti rumah orang putih itu tiada menjadi cacat melainkan hendaklah jangan diubah itikad adanya/..” (1991:618) [Underlining mine]

This is why the authors have highlighted other factors destructive to Islam and the country, such as false religious teaching in the story of Lebai Tamat (1991:487-90); the piracy problems, the rulers who violated religion and the old traditions, at the same time have focused so strongly on good religious rulers as role models. They have recognized that potential destructive elements do not necessarily come from outside, as greater dangers could lurk inside the country.

Islam as a core value has strongly influenced the narrative style, so the authors tend to be didactic and to preach in their writing. Religious quotations are included to reinforce the moral message:

"Di dalam itu mudah-mudahan Allah Subhanahu wa Taala mengampuni antara kedua pihak serta mendamaikan antara kedua pihak di dalam negeri akhirat. ((Maka)) iaitu harus kepada Allah Taala seperti kata sahib al-Jawhar: wa man yamutu wa lam yatub min dzanbihi fa amruhu mauduun li rabbihi. Yakni barang siapa mati ia dan tiada bertaubat daripada dosanya maka pekerjaannya itu serahkanlah bagi Tuhannya. Insha yuaddzabu wa insha yughfaru, yakni jika dikehendaknya diseksanya dan jika dikehendaknya diampuninya)." (1991:445)

The authors include religious quotations to justify developments of events, or as rationales for the narrative plot. For example, the death of Raja Haji is given a religious interpretation and a more philosophical outlook, thus explaining the rise and fall of a ruler from an Islamic perspective:

"Syahadan kata sahib al-hikayat adalah kira-kira delapan tahun Yang Dipertuan Muda Raja Haji memerintahkan kerajaan negeri Riau dengan segala takluk daerahnyaa,

maka datanglah takdir Allah Taala yang amat kuasanya serta melaku(kan) kehendak-Nya atas (segala hamba-Nya dengan hikmat-Nya (yang mubalighat), serta memberitahu atas hamba-Nya akan kekejian dunia yang tiada kekal dan nikmatnya yang tiada tentu, padahal berpindah-pindah daripada satu hal ((kepada satu hal)) keadaannya, supaya segala hamba-Nya jangan mengasihi dunia ini dan hendaklah kasihkan akhirat negeri (yang kekal dan nikmatnya yang maha besar, dan kerajaannya yang maha besar. Seperti firman-Nya di dalam Quran al-'azim, Yakni maka apabila engkau lihat kelak di sana yakni di akhirat, engkau lihatlah akan nikmat dan kerajaan yang maha besar, hingga beberapa ayat di belakang menyatakan nikmat akhirat itu dan kehinaan dunia ini)" - (1991:398)

The coronation of Sultan Sulaiman Badr al-Alam Syah to replace the deposed Sultan Mahmud is also seen from a religious perspective, and this justifies their support for him:

"Maka /tetap dan/ teguhlah pekerjaan itu (seperti firman Allah Taala di dalam Quran al-azim, Artinya firman Allah Taala di dalam Quran yang maha besar itu mendatangkan kerajaan barang siapa yang dikehendaknya, dan memuliakan barang siapa yang dikehendaknya dan menghinakan barang siapa yang dihendaknya pada Allah jua, segala kebajikan bahawa sesungguhnya engkau lah ya Tuhanku atas tiap-tiap sesuatu amat kuasa intiha)." (1991:631)

These quotations explain the message of faith and determination in Islam (concepts of *takdir*, *qada'* and *qadar*); but by its inclusion it increases the authority of the authors, for it reflects an image of them as men knowledgeable in Islam and thus gives greater force or weight to their words/text. It also enhances the legitimacy of the persons and deeds discussed. Here, it is God's will that Sultan Sulaiman should be helped by the Bugis. The

function of the quotations is not only to explain the rationale of the development of the plot from an Islamic perspective, but to reinforce the narrative impact.

Concept of Wadih (clarity/simplicity) in writing

Another criterion of good writing held by the authors is 'Wadih' or clarity/brevity. Clear and short accounts are highly valued by the authors, as they aimed to achieve this in their work. In order to understand this factor, it is interesting to analyse the authors' objectives in writing:

"pada kitab ini bukannya maksudku akan memperbuat cetera yang panjang-panjang itu, kerana ceteranya yang panjang sudah ada beberapa banyak karangan-karangan orang yang dahulu-dahulu daripada aku, dengan kitab ada yang disurat dengan tangan ada yang dicetak dengan suratan taba. Adapun yang aku perbuat ini sekadarkan hendak menyatakan peraturan yang jatuh pada perjalanan raja-raja Melayu dengan raja-raja (sebelah) Bugis, tatkala pada masa raja-raja sebelah Bugis dan raja-raja sebelah Pulau Perca, supaya mengetahui jalan dan sebab(nya) bercampuran nasab ((setengah atas setengahnya)), dengan perkataan dan karangan yang kemas supaya mudah menghafazkan dan memahami barang siapa (yang) berkehendak (kepada) memahami dia." (1991:128-9)

The authors wanted to produce short/brief accounts [*bukan cetera yang panjang-panjang*]; neat work [*kemas*]; which is simple/easy for readers to understand and remember [*mudah menghafazkan dan memahami*]. The needs of readers become the concern of the authors. They are aware that long accounts of the events are already available either in the manuscript or in printed forms. But such long descriptions are not easy for contemporary readers to read and understand. The authors believe that short and clear reading material is

what their readers need in order to know history and learn the truth, and it is their duty and objective to produce such work. This is a rather new and modern notion of writing which expresses an awareness of value of the systematic and scientific thinking in writing and reading.

The authors show consistent efforts throughout the text to achieve this aim. They are very direct in explaining their motives and objectives, the abstract of their text, the titles of their works and their concept of beauty in writing, and they are brief in all descriptions. Even though the text covers historical events of almost two centuries, each episode is only given a brief description or narration. In several parts, the authors have shortened their narrative and have given their reason for doing so:

“pada menyatakan perjalanan dan kelakuan segala raja-raja yang telah tersebut itu, atas jalan yang ringkas dan simpan, supaya mudah menghafalkan bagi orang (yang) berkehendak, pada menghafalkan dia (mulakhhasan)” - (1991:175) [Underlining mine]

“tiadalah disebutkan di sini kerana ((hendak)) mengambil simpannya ((sahaja)) supaya jadi ((segera))” - (1991:165)

Other examples are also found on pages 554, 581, 582, 603.

In order to help readers follow the narration, the authors have made imposed a certain arrangement or order on their writing. When describing the salasilah of the rulers, they followed the order of age:

“kerana aku aturkan mana-mana saudaranya yang tuha, aku dahulukan adanya.”
(1991:156)

“Adapun /sebab/ terkemudian, kerana ia pangkat anak daripada Raja Haji (al-Marhum fi sabil Allah) kerana munasabah yang pangkat muda itu di belakang”. (1991:170)

In the text, we find numerous wars which could be difficult for readers to remember clearly. Realizing this, the authors have listed the wars chronologically and have simplified the descriptions at the end of the section:

“Syahadan (maka) aku aturkan banyaknya kali berperang Raja Kecil Siak dengan opu-opu raja Bugis yang jadi Yang Dipertuan Muda di dalam Riau hingga sampai kepada anak cucunya. Inilah bilangannya yang tersebut di bawah ini...” (1991:344)

Their summary of war events is useful for their readers as it helps them to recall these events better. However, this was done with a deeper underlying motive. By listing all the wars which involved the Buginese, the authors also intended to reemphasize the heroism and self-sacrifice of the Buginese in order to help the Malay Sultans to regain and protect their throne.

The authors have displayed great skill in producing concise account but not without specific motives in mind. We can understand their short style of narration if we compare it to Abdullah’s description of similar events in the *Hikayat Abdullah*. Both texts, *Hikayat Abdullah* and *Tuhfat al-Nafis*, describe important historical episodes in early Singapore

history when the British interfered to take hold of Singapore in a scheme devised by Major Farquhar and Raffles.

Hikayat Abdullah, written in 1843 and lithographed in 1849, describes the event in two chapters (chap 12 and 14). In chap 12 Abdullah describes the initial efforts made by Farquhar in Singapore before the arrival of Raffles, including other activities while waiting for him; and he also writes about the Temenggung who told Farquhar about the internal conflict between the Malay rulers. Chapter 14 describes events immediately after the arrival of Raffles with detailed accounts of the events preceeding the ceremony; Tengku Long's suspicious character; the extraordinary happenings on the day; and the development of Singapore and royal life after the event. In this episode, Abdullah seems to be even more sharp and detailed in his writing, for even the height of the pole at the *padang* and the setting of the events is described. He also tries to focus on the emotion and character of the King, and gives his own interpretation of the event. Abdullah intends to give his own interpretation of the events as much as possible, even creating/adding 'imaginative or dramatic elements' (unexpected '*hujan panas*' on the eventful day) to reinforce his point.

Tuhfat al-Nafis, which was written almost 30 years after Abdullah wrote his text or 23 years after the publication of *Hikayat Abdullah*, provides only a very brief account of the event, about 3-4 pages long (refer to Appendix 5).

The description is surprisingly very brief, objective and without any personal remarks for such a significant event, which later had great implications for the Riau-Lingga Sultanate. Compared to some of the descriptions related to the Malay rulers in Trengganu

and Siak, the authors seem to prefer to let the description of the event stand by itself and to avoid personal involvement, leaving it to be interpreted by readers. Unlike Abdullah who tends to give his personal view on everything he describes or mentions, the authors of TN are very selective in their commentary and descriptions in the text. Some of the events and episodes are given detailed descriptions and personal remarks; on the other hand, certain events, such as the above episode, is briefly described without any personal statement.

We also note that they can be detailed in descriptions of wars, death bed scenes of Bugis rulers, the Governor-General's palace in Batavia, the coronation of Sultan Abd al - Rahman and the punishment of the chief of the pirates; and they are often very personal in showing their favour for the Bugis rulers. Nevertheless such detailed descriptions above are never lengthy and do not affect the fast narrative pace. An example of a detailed description is given below:

"Kemudian maka ia pun minta tasbihkan maka diunjukkan oleh isterinya sambil menangis. Kemudian bertanya pula ia kepada Raja Ali Haji, 'Pukul berapa ini?' Kata Raja Ali Haji, 'Hampir pukul sebelas.' Katanya, 'uzurlah tuan hari ini tak usahlah sembahyang Jumaat dahulu, jangan ditinggalkan saya.' Jawab Raja Ali, ' Baiklah'. Seketika lagi maka ia pun berkata, 'Sesak dada'. Kira-kira sampai pukul dua setengah, maka istighrakah ia di dalam zikir nasyid ithbat, dialihnya daripada zikir isim al-dhat. Seketika rohnya pun berpindahlah dari negeri yang fana ke negeri yang baka, maka dibahasakanlah kembali ke rahmat Allah Taala/kalu/inna liLlahi wa inna ilaihi rajiun. Maka diletakkan oleh Raja Ali Haji kepada bantal kepalanya serta dirahabnya yakni ditudungnyal. Maka berjeritanlah dan berderulah ratap tangis ahlinya serta segala anak raja-raja laki-laki dan perempuannya serta anak-anak Marhum Abd al-Rahman dan (anak-anak al-)Marhum Raja

Ali (dan bonda-bonda dan saudara-saudaranya) dengan segala isi istana, hingga sampai ke tanah. (Dan di dalam negeri) azmatlah bunyinya daripada jerit (tangis) mereka itu. Beberapa (pun) dilarang oleh Raja Ali Haji (serta ayahandanya Engku Haji Tua), maka tiada mereka itu diam ((lebih-lebih)) maklumlah kerana Yang Dipertuan Muda lagi (pun) mursyid, dan (Raja Abdullah itu) amat mengasihi segala saudaranya dan anak-anaknya, lagipun ((ia)) mursyid seperti segala orang(-orang) yang ahli al-tarikat al-Naksyabandiyyah.” (1991:640-1)

The description above illustrates the ‘blessed’ death of the well-respected and beloved pious ruler, YDM Raja Abdullah, and the great loss felt by the family and the country. Such a detailed description also highlights the close attachment of the author (Raja Ali Haji) to the ruler and his importance in royal circles. It is therefore an important literary technique employed to achieve the author’s specific objectives.

The style of narration varies according to the significance attached to each episode and also to the motive of writing based on the three criteria (truth, propriety and clarity) mentioned above. Considering the long list of historical events covered by the text and its fast narrative pace, the authors have been effective in their selection and combination of narrative styles.

Reader/audience Appreciation

The authors are conscious and clear of the motive, objectives and concept of beauty in writing and its potential impact or influence to its audience. They are aware of their own weakness and the weaknesses of the sources used, and the relationship between their

writing to the audience. They try to relate to readers, and make strong appeals hoping for the audience's active 'involvement' in relating the work, reflecting seriously on it, reciting prayers to the personalities mentioned, and even in adding to and improving further their work:

"akan tetapinya jika kita timbang-timbang serta dengan /di/fikir/kan antara orang saudara-bersaudara ipar-beripar tuan semua pun lebih maklumlah intiha)." (1991:373)

[Underlining mine]

"Di dalam hal itu tuan-tuan sekalian lebih maklum adat manusia mana-mana yang manfaat kepada dirinya itulah yang dikehendaknya." (1991:420) [Underlining mine]

"Syahadan / dinyatakan pula/ barang siapa anak cucunya atau lainnya membaca sejarah siarah ini apabila habis, maka hendaklah memberi khenduri kepada yang mati-mati serta mendoakan mana-mana yang lagi tinggal hidup adanya... supaya diperoleh selamat al-dunya wa al-akhirat dengan kesempurnaan sekaliannya wa Llahu al-tawfik " (1991:655)

[Underlining mine]

"melainkan siapa-siapa/pula/yang dapat/ di belakang (akulah) daripada anak cucu/nya maka/ aku harapkan menambah karangan aku ini jika dapat" (1991:156)

Therefore, when the authors end the narrative, they show that do not intend to close the text. Instead, they provide a clear opening and beginning for a new exploration and evaluation of the text. The work no longer belongs to the authors, but has become the heritage of the whole community and of humanity. The authors want to express that they have accomplished the huge task and fulfilled their moral responsibility in defining and

searching for truth, propriety and beauty in life; it is then up to new generations to study and improve upon the text, just as they have done with earlier writings. They have continued the inherited function of literature, and therefore strongly urge for similar efforts to be continued. By displaying the traits of socially sensitive and concerned authors, with a great mastery of cultural and religious knowledge, they aim not to be seen as merely the defenders of their own group's interests, but more to project a more accepted image as custodians of culture and religion. These are the impressions and manifested image skillfully projected in their text.

Conclusions

TN is not only an important historical document. It is an important piece of literature with interesting and distinct features. TN clearly describes how the Bugis created a diaspora government based on an effective assimilation of Bugis political and cultural values within a local framework (Andaya 1995:136). Besides this important historical development, at the same time it shows that the process of assimilation is also reflected in the literary sphere.

The authors have shown great skill in using and capitalizing on the conventional theme of loyalty (*sumpah setia*) and the compositional structure, which is similar to the *Sejarah Melayu*, to fulfill their personal aims. They have adapted those Malay conventional elements and Islamic terms of reference, as reflected in their notions of beauty and authorship (*sahih*, *patut* and *wadih*), to justify and defend Bugis political interests. The authors have employed various narrative techniques (multi-focus technique and combinations of styles of description) and literary devices, such as *kinayat perkataan*, *pantuns*, religious quotations, dreams etc., to achieve their personal objectives. The literary

achievements of the authors are shown in their subtle and skillful treatment of those theme, structures, techniques and devices; mastery of social ethos and religious values, and clear understanding of social/readers' expectations of such a historical work. Hence, they are able to achieve their objectives and to meet the new challenges of their time, effectively without changing the normative poetics, and at the same time, projecting a positive image of themselves as the champions of culture and religion. From the perspective of conventions and normative poetics, the authors of TN, therefore, continue the steps earlier explored and taken by Lauddin and Fakihi Saghir.

Appendix 4

ANALOGY/ LITERARY EXPRESSION/SYMBOLISM

Dreams as Symbols of Power

Apabila sudah siap maka muafakatliah ia hendak masuk ke negeri Johor dan Melaka mengembara pada sebelah tanah itu, kerana ia sudah mendapat (satu) alamat tatkala masa hendak keluar daripada tanah bugis itu: iaitu Opu Dahing Menambun ada bermimpi akan zakar saudaranya Opu Dahing cellak itu menjulur/ laut/ menjadi naga. Adalah kepalanya mengadap ke sebelah pihak barat Johor. Maka ditakbirkan orang, anak cucunya akan mendapat kerajaan (di sebelah Johor) dan Riau yang berpanjangan (jua) masanya (adanya)..(1991:184)

Raja Api

Maka pada malam itu keluar(lah) memancar ke atas seperti (api) pancar ke atas / daripada peti (jenazah al-marhum) itu (Raja Haji). Maka gaduhlah orang-(orang) Melaka itu melihatkan hal itu. Maka di dalam tengah-tengah bergaduh(-gaduh) itu maka kapal yang akan membawa jenazah al-Marhum Raja Haji itu pun meletuplah terbakar terbang ke udara segala isinya serta orang / di dalam kapal itu/ seorang pun tiada yang lepas (mati semuanya. Syahadan /ber/kata kaul yang menuturkan itu tiadalah jadi dibawanya (jenazah al-Marhum Raja Haji itu) pindah ke negeri lain maka ditanamnya juga di Melaka (itu) hingga datang ambil dari (negeri) Riau (adanya). Syahadan kata kaul yang menutur(kan) sebab itulah digelar(nya) oleh Holanda-Holanda yang dahulu dengan nama Raja Api (intiha).(1991:415-6).

Dreams of sickness

Kemudian Yang Dipertuan (muda) pun bertitah kepada Datuk Syahbandar titahnya, "Kami sudah mimpi memang si Ahmad datang dari Betawi(kami lihat) tiada berbaju, rupanya inilah takbirnya." Syahadan beberapa kali sudah berkeliaran orang(-orang) di Pulau Penyengat (itu) mengatakan Raja Ahmad sudah hilang daripada sangat sakitnya itu..(1991:528).

Fitnah seumpama api

Mangkin menyalahlah fitnah daripada sehari kepada sehari, mangkin banyak(lah) fitnah mangkin besar, umpama api mangkin besar(lah) nyalanya, akhir-akhirnya tiada dapat dipadamkan lagi. Syahadan melarat(lah) api itu mengatakan Raja Kecil itu tiada tentu amat putera Marhum mangkat di Julang, sebab tiga kaul yang telah lalu itu bersalahan...(1991:195)

Gembiranya seperti api yang bernyala-nyala

Maka apakala Opu Dahing Parani /itu/ mendengar perkataan surat / daripada ?? (Raja Sulaiman) itu, (maka) berbangkitlah gembiranya seperti api yang bernyala-nyala...(1991:200)

Envy and jealousy

Maka hal yang demikian itu, (iaitu tiga perkara inilah, menjadi pokok hasad al-mahsud wa hakid al-mahkud, yakni pekerjaan yang dengki pada didengikan, dan pekerjaan dendam yang didendamkan masing di dalam hati, bertambah (pula) melihatkan negeri sudah ramai Bugis pula memerintahnya, makin bertambahlah dendam hatinya itu,

bernyalalah (mungkin lama mungkin besar. Maka apabila api itu sudah besar payahlah padamnya dan payah pula memadamkannya akhir-akhirnya menjadi seterulah api itu dan marah. Maka memakanlah api itu akan akal yang baik. Maka keluarlah buah api itu dan bunga api itu, pada perkataan dan pada kelakuan pada mencari apa-apa yang akan menjadi kebinasaan dan kesusahan atas seterusnya intiha. (1991:272)

Sadness

Maka jadilah dukacitanya itu susahnya seumpama api maka memakanlah kepada sabarnya. Maka (hilanglah sabarnya itu) jadi melakukan dan mengikutkan hawa nafsunya sebab kerana hendak melepaskan piciknya dan susahnya (pada sangkanya). Maka tiadalah memikirkan yang di belakangnya /lagi/.. (1991:430)

Harimau

Maka apabila Sultan Mahmud mendengar fetur yang turun itu, maka Sultan Mahmud pun mengambur seperti harimau yang pantas/ maka dirapatnya perahunya ke jambatan, serta tiba.. (1991:274)

Karung

Bukannya perbuatan patik, dan bukannya perbuatan Tuanku, tiada(lah) dapat patik bertahan lagi, seumpama karung sudah penuh sesaklah) tiada muat lagi. (Dan) jikalau patik bertahan sehari saja (lagi), tentulah jadi (ke)rugi(an) atas diri Tuanku.. (1991:286)

Pokok

Apalah yang saya semua hendak bayarkan (hal Riau ini seumpama pokok-pokok baharu hendak bertunas, janganlah buah bunga-bunga pun belum keluar)..(1991:315)

Susu dan Anjing (Dutch humiliation to ruler of Trengganu)

“Allah! Allah! (Tuhan)! beberapa macam bangkitannya Holanda itu serta (dengan) kata nistanya akan Yang Dipertuan Terengganu itu buruk baiknya. Jikalau sekiranya (dicara martabat orang-orang kita di sini tiadalah cakap mengatakan perkataan yang demikian itu. Jikalau sekiranya kepada bahasa Melayu diremas susu itu dengan segera diberi/kan/ (makan) (kepada) anjing tidaklah terjilat olehnya” (1991:446)

Satu perahu nakhoda dua...beraja dua...api..

Maka di dalam hal itu jadi(lah) bersalah-salahan faham antara kedua pihak (itu, lebih-lebih maklumlah satu perahu nakhoda dua dan satu negeri beraja dua. Maka itulah jadi pokok fitnah antara kedua pihak), mangkin lama mangkin besar fitnah itu seumpama api payahlah memadamnya. (Maka) apabila sudah besar, sukarlah memadamkan hingga selesaikah yang dimakannya (itu), maka baharulah berhenti, demikianlah umpamanya. (1991:465)

Pantuns

To describe the war between Raja Kecil and the Bugis at Linggi:

Utik-utik ikan bambangan
Minyak ketiau di hujung galah
Raja Kecil silakan pulang
Linggi diserang Riau yang alah.
(1991:211)

(Syahadan pada perang inilah ((konon)) diperbuat oleh orang-orang Melayu pantun -
to show their victory over Bugis)

On the other hand 'Syahadan kata setengah pantun/ orang Riau demikianlah konon
bunyinya/

Terketai-ketai anak sembilang
Budak merayau dengan/nya/galah
Raja Kecil silakan pulang
Linggi diserang Riau yang alah
(1991:211)

To describe how the Bugis felt about paying the debts of Malay rulers to the Dutch:

Tinggi bukit Sukadana
tempat bertanam halia padi
sakitnya muda kena bencana
sebarang kerja tidak menjadi
(1991:318)

Appendix 5

Narrative Style of *Tuhfat al-Nafis*
- A brief description of historical event

Sebermula adapun Kernil Ferkuar itu belayar/lah ia ke Singapura. Maka berjumpalah ia dengan Temenggung Abd al-Rahman, maka muafakatlah ia (musyawarah) pada pekerjaan minta S'pura itu serta hendak merajakan Tengku Lung. Akan (tetapinya) Mejur Wilim Ferkuar itu belum (lagi) berani memutuskan tiap-tiap pekerjaan yg dimuafakatkannya dengan temenggung itu, kerana ia hendak menantikan Tuan Raflis juga (datang) dari Benggala. Syahadan di dalam tiada beberapa /lamanya/ antara/itu/ maka Tuan Raflis pun datanglah dari Benggala membawa empat buah kapal dan dua buah keci. Maka apabila (sampai ia ke Singapura maka turunlah engku temenggung bersama-sama Mejur Wilim Ferkuar ke kapal Tuan Raflis itu. Maka aapabila) berjumpa/keduanya itu/ (dengan Tuan Raflis)/ maka/ berkhabarlah Mejur Wilim Ferkuar itu pada pekerjaan muafakat dengan (engku) temenggung pada merajakan Tengku Lung di Singapura. Maka apabila Tuan Raflis mendengar)per)khabar(an Mejur) Ferkuar itu terkejutlah ia (seraya) katanya, "Belum engkau perbuat bersama-sama temenggung/lagi/ pekerjaan itu." Maka jawab (temenggung/kepada Tuan Raflis/serta Tuan Mejur Wilim) Ferkuar, "Belum lagi perbuat sebab itu pekerjaan besar hendak menantikan Tuan Raflis juga. "Setelah Tuan Raflis mendengar khabar (keduanya) itu katanya, "Sekarang ini juga pergi suruhkan orang (yang patut boleh)ambil Tengku Lung bawa ke Singapura ini boleh lekas kita selesaikan. ((Akan)) tetapi jangan(laH) tahu orang dahulu rahsia ini barangkali tahu Holanda tentu disuruhnya Raja Muda memegangkan Tengku Lung itu." Maka jawab temenggung, " Baiklah." (maka engku temenggung pun naiklah ke darat, maka) lalu menyuruh Raja Ambung mengambil

Tenggu Lung ke Riau. Maka Raja Ambung pun pergilah ke Riau. Maka (apabila tiba ke Riau maka) berjumpalah ia dengan Tengku Lung, maka lalu(lah) dikhabarkannya segala rahsia dan maksud Tuan Rafliis (serta Mejur Wilim Ferkuar serta engku temenggung) itu. Maka relalah Tengku Lung itu akan kehendak Tuan Rafliis itu. Maka pada ketika malam hari belayar(lah) Tengku LUnG/itu/bersama-sama Raja Ambung ke Singapura dikatakan hendak mengail ke Terkulai maka (selalulah/ Tengku Lung/ ke Singapura.Maka) apabila sampai ke Singapura maka lalu(lah) dibawa oleh temenggung bersama-sama Tuan/Mejur Wilim/Ferkuar turun ke kapal perang mendapatkan Tuan Rafliis. Maka apabila berjumpa Tuan Rafliis (maka) dihormatilah sebagaimana adat menghormati raja-raja dipasangkan meriam (dan) dipukulkan tambur dan lainnya. Kemudian (maka) baharu(lah) dibawanya masuk ke dalam kapal itu. Maka diberilah kerusi, maka beraturlah duduk (Tengku Lung) dan (serta) Tuan Rafliis serta Mejur/ Wilim/Ferkuar itu. Maka berkhabarlah Tuan Rafliis itu kepada Tengku Lung itu dengan perkataan yang lemah lembut serta nasihat dan pujuk-pujuk yang halus-halus. Maka menerimalah Tengku Lung itu apa-apa maksud Tuan Rafliis itu. Maka /telah/ hasillah pekerjaannya (dan tahkiklah musyawarah dan muafakatnya.)

((Kemudian)) maka Tengku Lung itu dengan ((datuk)) temenggung pun (serta orang-orang Melayu pun) naiklah ke darat (semula, lalu ke rumah temenggung serta memakai-makai) dan Tuan Rafliis/itu pun/ serta orang besar-besarnya (pun) naiklah ke darat lalu membentang khemah di tengah padang, (serta segala orang besar-besarnya pun naiklah ke darat ke padang itu). Kemudian (maka) dipersilakanlah Tengku Lung serta Temenggung serta raja-raja dan orang-orang Melayu mana-mana yang ada itu, maka datanglah semuanya. Maka apabila tiba Tengku Lung/ itu/ kepada khemah Tuan Rafliis maka Tuan Rafliis serta (dengan) orang besar-besar (orang putih) pun keluarlah memberi

hormat dengan sehabis-habis hormat. Maka lalu dibawanya masuk ke dalam khemah itu duduk(lah) masing-masing (dengan) kerusinya. Maka (apabila sudah mustaid peraturannya duduk itu maka) Tuan Raflis pun menyuruh (keluarkan surat kepada satu orang putih. Maka dikeluarkannyalah oleh orang putih itu dua surat yang bergulung satu bahasa Inggeris dan satu bahasa Melayu. Maka) dibacalah surat (yang) bahasa Inggeris (itu) dahulu (oleh orang Inggeris). Kemudian dibaca pula oleh Encik Yahya jurutulis Tuan Mejur (Wilim) Ferkuar (itu) surat (yang) bahasa Melayu (itu) dengan nyaring suaranya. Adapun suraty itu demikian bunyinya, “Bahawa sesungguhnya hendaklah diketahui oleh segala orang yang /yua-tua yang/ tuan gebernur jenderal Benggala mengangkat(kan) Tengku Lung bergelar Sultan Hussein Syah ibn al-Marhum Sultan Mahmud Syah di dalam negeri Singapura serta teluk rantau jajahan / negeri yang tersebut itu/.”

Setelah itu maka segala orang putih pun memberi hormat semuanya, kemudian (tengku temenggung dan) Tengku Lung/ serta segala orang-orang Melayu/ pun baliklah. Maka apabila sampai ke rumah temenggung maka musyawarahlah hendak mengambil isterinya serta memindahkan segala orang-orangnya. Maka apabila (sudah) putus musyawarahnya maka Tengku Lung pun menitahkan temenggung membuat istana akan tempat isterinya. Syahadan kemudian harinya pindahlah segala isi (istana) Tengku Lung dan (isi) istana temenggung (serta orang-orangnya) ke Singapura, maka sunyilah Kampung Bulang di Pulau Penyengat (itu). Dan orang Inggeris pun membuatlah negeri /di/Singapura dan banyaklah orang-orang Melayu dan (rakyat-rakyat dan)Cina-Cina berhimpun(lah) ke Singapura makan gaji (bekerja) berbuat negeri setiap-tiap hari, serta dagang pun banyaklah datang adanya.

(1991:508-511 or 314-317)

CHAPTER 10

TARIKH DATU' BENTARA LUAR JOHOR

Introduction

Tarikh Datu' Bentara Luar Johor (TDBLJ) consists of three autobiographical narratives by Mohamed Salleh bin Perang, the Datuk Bentara Luar Johor (1841-1915), one of the important pioneers of the modern state of Johor. Part One is Salleh's account of important events in his life from birth to the end of his career, and was written shortly before his death in 1915. Part Two is in the form of letter to his friend, Na Tian Piet, written at the height of his career in 1894. Part Three, written in diary form in 1883, recounts Salleh's trips to Japan and China. It was published in 1928 after Salleh's death by Mohamed bin Haji Alias, and printed in Jawi by al-Attas Press.

The text has been carefully studied by Sweeney (1980a,b) who has also emphasised its historical and literary significance with regard to the development of Malay literature. Information about the author and historical background, as well as a translation and analysis of the text was provided in a scholarly way by Sweeney. After comparing it with Abdullah's work, Sweeney categorises TDBLJ as the first Malay autobiography. Sweeney believes that Salleh's work is significant because it was produced when the idea of recounting one's own life story was still a novel one and the concept of autobiography still alien in Malay society (1980).

TDBLJ has distinctive features, not only from the structural and formal aspects, but also in its treatment of self within the Malay feudal setting and the framework of values in Malay society during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. However, the author, following the steps taken by Fakhir Saghir and Raja Ali Haji and Raja Ahmad, has projected himself and criticized his *raja* without breaking the widely accepted conventional norms and values of his society, while, at the same time enhancing the feudal tradition. This chapter aims to add to Sweeney's earlier discussion by further examining the literary devices used by Salleh Perang in his writing in order to achieve his personal aims and fulfil his social role as preserver of cultural values and feudal ethos.

ARRANGEMENT OF TEXT

The text has been arranged by the compiler, Mohamed bin Haji Taib, based on a "close-up" technique. It starts with a general survey of Salleh's life. This is followed by a focus on his development and lifetime achievements. The text ends with a closer focus on Salleh's official duty to accompany the ruler in a trip to Japan and China. This is slightly different from the author's own chronological approach to writing, which is actually based on a "zooming" technique: He wrote on a single assignment (the trip) in 1883, and followed this up in 1894, by writing the letter which touches on his life achievements. Then, shortly before his death in 1915, he wrote an autobiographical narrative of his life since birth.

COMPOSITIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE TEXT

The autobiography comprises three types of writing- account of personal life, letter and diary. Based on the compiler's arrangement, we may divide Salleh's work into three parts. Thus the general surface structure can, therefore, be divided into the following sections:

- Part 1 -** An account of personal life
 the development and decline of his life
 and its heavy dependence on his relationship
 with the monarch (Abu Bakar, 1st Sultan of Johor)
- Part 2 -** Letter to Na Tian Piet
 His close relationship with the Johor Kingdom and
 how the development of Johor shaped his own development
- Part 3 -** A diary
 A microcosm of Parts One and Two -
 daily notes on his trip
 personal discourse but for public duty

It is difficult to derive the true style of Salleh's writing through his work, not only because the compilation and arrangement of the text was not done the author himself and was only published after Salleh's death, but also certain parts of the text are not complete.

For example, the closing part of the letter is not included and this may explain its abrupt ending. Also, the *pantun* seems to be in draft form (Sweeney, 1980:26,23). Therefore, it is necessary to see each part independently.

The structure of the account of personal life is actually similar to the development of Salleh's own life and its relationship to the state of Johor. The structure of Salleh's letter, which is Part Two of the text, can be simplified as follows:

The Letter

- I. Introduction (on appreciation of friendship)
- II. Salleh's early life in Singapore (poverty, pains and suffering)
- III. Salleh's relationship to Johor State:
 - A. Founding of Johor and beginning of his new life
 - B. Preparatory or early self development
 - C. Mature development- the great Kingdom and his great contributions
 - D. The threat of kingdom (Jementah War) and the height of his life

The Diary

The diary is structured as follows:

1. *Pantun berkait* (Salleh's prayer for safety and blessing)
2. The Daily descriptions of his journey (from departure to safe return)

It is necessary to look more closely at the deep structure of the text to formulate the essence of Salleh's writing, especially on his modes of thinking and types of inner expressions, which are important to know his notion of self:

THE DEEP STRUCTURE OF TDBLJ

Types of writing	Modes of thinking	Type of inner expressions
Own life account	loyalty vs recognition	self-defense
Letter	pride vs shame	self-reconciliation
Diary	freedom vs duty	self-restraint

The three types of writing are actually three different discourses, each with a different mode of thinking and level of inner expression, as a result of constant conflicts within author's own self. In the account of personal life, Salleh is faced with inner conflict between his sense of loyalty and personal urge for public recognition of his service. He tries to defend his 'tarnished' reputation, while, at the same time, reinforcing his loyalty. Thus, between the two forces of loyalty and recognition, he has turned to self-defense. In the letter to his friend, Salleh is caught in a dilemma between his inner desire to project his ego deriving from pride, and his sense of shame from social and religious conventions which hinders any form of self-projection. Hence, he reconciles the two elements by introducing himself within socially acceptable modes of expression. In the diary, Salleh is subconsciously challenged to exercise his inner freedom for expression during the trip, as he could have written more freely of his feelings and experiences, but he is trapped by his

official duty. Constraint by his sense of duty and obligation, he seems to restrain himself and occasionally turns to the beauty of nature and his unfamiliar surroundings for self expression. But all these modes of thinking and inner expressions, as expressed in the three forms of writing, manifest his mind-set or psychological orientation towards the monarch as the anchorage of his existence and consciousness. All Salleh's the autobiographical works above have shown that the monarch is indeed the centre or focus of his life.

Notion of Self

An Individual in the Court Circle - "Seumpama Air dengan Gelombang"

TDBLJ gives a picture of Salleh's life within the framework of the *istana* circle. His early life in Singapore and later life in Johor are greatly influenced and shaped by the inner development of the court. The weak monarchy in Telok Belanga caused poverty and hardship to Salleh's early childhood, and the internal conflict between *Sultan* and *Temenggung* hindered his education and teaching career. It was only with the founding of Johor, that Salleh's life extend a new era with the promise of a bright future as this event had given him and family '*rahmat dan rezeki*' (bread and blessing).

Monarchy and its monarch had provided Salleh and his family with a new and prosperous life. On his part, as a humble servant and subject, he offered his whole life to his monarch with total loyalty and devotion.

From the founding of Johor onward, Salleh's association and relationship to Johor and his monarch are so close as to be almost inseparable. In fact, the image that Salleh tends to portray is of Johor and himself as one. Salleh describes this relationship as follow:

"hal diri saya dengan kerajaan Johor itu boleh dikatakan seumpama air dengan gelombang jua adanya jika Johor itu laksana sepohon kayu yang besar dan keadaan diri saya pun seumpama sepohon pokok' yang menjalar di atasnya menumpang melilit segenap dahan dan cawangnya itu demikian ibaratnya." (1980:37)

CONCEPT OF LOYALTY

- Image of Self Reflected From A Royal Mirror

In his writing, Salleh projects a strong sense of loyalty to his monarch, conforming to the spirit of 'waad' (covenant) of Bukit Seguntang. He continues the role and function of previous Malay Bendaharas, though with additional 'modern' tasks and utilisation of his surveying skills. Salleh was the chief survey engineer who drew the map of Johor, and, thus his geographical skill contributed to solving disagreements conflicts between Johor, Malacca and Pahang in determining their territories. Salleh proudly describes his task as surveyor thus:

"Maka yang terlebih fardhu bagi saya menjaga pekerjaan ladang gambir itu sahaja serta menjadi kepala engineer serbe mengukur2 tanah seluruh perintah Johor dan membuat peta negeri Johor itu. Lebih tiga tahun maka peta negeri Johor itu pun sudah dan diaku oleh kepala2 tukang ukur di London betul ukurannya itu." (1980:44)¹

¹ Salleh's maps are still in existence. Abdul Rahman bin Andak, the adviser to Sultan Abu Bakar of Johor, at a meeting of the Royal Geographical Society in London, gave praise to Salleh as a "naturally clever man" who had invented a rattan chain more practical for measuring on jungle rivers than the ordinary Gunter's chain (Sweeney 1980:19)

In his writing, Salleh uses various modes to express his sense of loyalty. One of them is reflected in his usual replies to the orders of his monarch:

"Ta'at patik" (1980:9)

"Ta'at" (1980:9,10)

"Apa dititah patik ta'at" (1980:11)

"Titah ta'atlah patik" (1980:11, 15)

"Titah Kebawah Duli Yang Maha Mulia Tuanku patik taat dengan seberapa daya upaya patik cuba menjadikan mudah-mudahan dengan berkat daulat keBawah Duli Yang Maha Mulia jaya pekerjaan patik dengan selamat sempurnanya!" (1980:12)

"Harap diampun apa jua titah patik ta'at" (1980:12)

"Tuanku" (1980:15,16)

"Titah patik ta'at" (1980:16)

In Part One alone, he gives expression to his loyalty as many as 13 times. Salleh also uses conventional self-reference, such as *"fakir"* and *"patik"* to describe himself in relation to the monarch. Besides such continuous "formulaic" expressions of loyalty, he also took an official oath which legitimized his duty and loyalty to his monarch:

"Pada 3 marc fakir dapat gelaran 'Datu' Bentara Luar' fakir bersumpah setia kebawah Duli Yang Maha Mulia Tuanku dengan berniat yang sangat baik diatas raja dan negeri Johor." (1980:9)

Salleh perceives his duty as an honourable succession to the long and proudly inherited tradition of his family, who had served seven generations of Johor rulers:

"karena turun menurun datu' nenek moyang kita semuanya sudah bersumpah setia dengan datu' nenek moyang turun menurun sultan Johor dengan berniat yang baik daripada panglima perang Lajat bin 'Abdul Rahim tempohnya itu Sultan 'Abdul Jalil, daripada panglima perang Awang bin Lajat tempohnya itu Temenggung 'Abdul Rahman dari Riau lalu ke Bulang dari Bulang ke Pulau Singapura, Mohamed Salleh bin Awang hingga Perang bin Mohamed Salleh tempohnya itu Temenggung Ibrahim dalam Singapura di Telok Belanga, fakir Mohamed Salleh bin Perang tempohnya itu Sultan Abu Bakar hingga Sultan Ibrahim dari Teluk Belanga hingga ke Johor Baharu." (1980:17)

In fact, Salleh believes that his life and the Johor Sultanate have been linked since the historical beginning of the Malacca kingdom in 1511:

"asal keturunan saya ternak Johor didikan daripada memerintah [=pemerintah] Johor telah tujuh keturunan daripada tanda[=tanda] baginda al-marhum2 Sultan Johor yang ada ini yang tiada boleh nenek moyang saya mengerjakan dia bolehlah dikatakan daripada zaman al-marhum Sultan Ahmad yang berdiri kerajaan Johor itu di Melaka dalam tahun Masihi 1511 yang telah dikalahkan oleh bangsa Portugis sehingga berpindahlah kerajaan Melayu Johor ke Riau dan berdirilah pula kerajaan Sultan Johor itu di Lingga sampailah kepada tahun Masihi 1819 pada masa kerajaan itu di Pulau Bulang dalam jajahan Riau." (1980:31)

Thus, Salleh sees his life-long duty and responsibility as service to the monarch, and he sets out to achieve an honourable reputation as one who will be remembered for his such service rendered to the monarch:

“jangan takut membuat baik serta betul dengan raja Insya’Allah Ta’ala selamat sempurna hidup hak tertentu akan mati, nama yang baik dan jahat tertinggal selamanya dunia ini- Amin ya rabba’l-’alamin!” (1980:17)

Salleh’s life account is not merely a self-introduction but more a self-defence of his public image. Actually, his autobiography is mainly anecdotal and not an intimate account of personal or private matters. Like other authors previously discussed, Salleh gives very little information about his own family, mentioning briefly his parents and his son. Salleh has written his account by focussing on certain important events or aspects of his life, which he considers of interest or relevant to his public duty. Even his own initiative and efforts he put into learning the Chinese language and acquiring skill on painting, are intended to help him in his national duty as a service to his monarch rather than for personal interest and satisfaction:

“ilmu pengetahuan yang demikian ada beruntung pada saya bagi muslihat kerajaan dan negeri dengan sebab banyak percampuran dengan mereka itu sehingga beberapa rahsia yang tersembunyi dapat oleh saya, serta teguh hati dan kepercayaannya di atas saya bagi segala pekerjaan yang berkenaan dengan kerajaan negeri dan barang apa yang hendak diperbuatnya adalah ia berasa segan dan malu jua.” (1980:43)

Salleh not only performed his duties to the best of his ability in order to keep his “*sumpah setia*” (oath of loyalty), but also sacrificed his own house for the sake of his monarch. Moreover, he did so willingly and with the utmost humility:

“fakir mengadap kebawah Duli Yang Maha Mulia Tuanku di istana semayam, titah bertanya ‘Apa khabar Datu’ dapat surat saya?’ Fakir jawab ‘Dapat tuanku ini patik datang’, lalu fakir sembahkan sekeping gerant tanah dan fakir sembahkan ‘Rumah itu sudah buru’”. Titah Kebawah Duli Yang Maha Mulia Tuanku ‘Berapa harga?’ Fakir jawab ‘Tiada ada harga pada patik’. Titah ‘Baik Datu’ saya jadikan sebuah rumah di tanah Datu’ satu Jalan Teberau bagaimana rumah yang ada itu’ Fakir jawab ‘Tuanku.’ “ (1980:15).

Salleh’s relationship to his monarch is not only confined to professional duty and philosophy. Sweeney finds that Salleh spares no pains to demonstrate the intimacy of his relationship to Abu Bakar and the extent of the trust which the monarch placed in him (1980:37). Salleh also expresses strong emotional ties to the monarch, and is always affected by any changes that happened to his monarch. For example, he was in great sorrow when the monarch fell ill:

“Pada 18 marc fakir balik ke Batu Pahat dengan berhati yang sangat dukacita hal pelayaran Kebawah Duli Yang Maha Mulia Tuanku pada kali ini ke London oleh sebab tampak ‘uzur’” (1980:13)

When the monarch recovered from his illness, Salleh was delighted:

“Kebawah Duli kurang - Alhamdullillah Syukur!” (1980:64)

On hearing of his monarch's death, Salleh was overcome with grief:

"waktu itu tidak dapat fakir menyatakan hampa dada fakir dengan mengeluarkan airmata..." (1980:14)

Although, Salleh was bitter when he finally fell from royal favour and was forced to retire, yet he never blamed the Sultan. Insteads, he takes a philosophical attitude towards and rationalises his fate by suggesting that he is a victim of *"pesona"* (slander).² His unswerving loyalty and total devotion to both monarchs are still untarnished and, in fact reenforced in his *"amanat dan pesan"* (will and message to his descendents):

"dan sangat berat amanat dan pesan fakir daripada anak2 cucu cicit turun menurun daripada zuriat fakir semuanya jangan ada terlintas di hati perut ada berniat yang tiada baik di atas raja sendiri atau meninggal negeri dan jajahan Johor hidup tidak selamat kelak." (1980:17)

Thus, Salleh employs the conventional narrative device of "the dying injunction and will of a king" to communicate his own message, with slight adjustments to suit his personal circumstances.

Concept of Authorship

"Adab dan tertib Sopan" (Social Ethics and Decorum)

In order to understand Salleh's concept of authorship, it is necessary to look at his literary background. Yet, his works furnish us with very little information and internal evidence on

² For more information on the slander refer to Sweeney (1980:21)

this. Salleh himself mentions the great influence of Encik Long in his formative years and career development, particularly on the proper use of language and “*adab dan tertib-sopan*” (social ethics and decorum) in communication:

“En.Long itu seorang yang budiman dan murah hati dan sangatlah ia mengambil berat dalam hal saya mengajar dan memberi nasihat atas segala hak yang kebajikan serta jalan2 aturan dan adat istiadat kerajaan dan mengajar daripada jalan surat menyurat mengutus kepada segala raja yang besar2 tambahan pula lebih lagi menambah faham saya oleh menyalin beberapa surat yang berguna dan berfaedah di dalam jabatan kerajaan yang terhimpun padanya itu serta pula sehari2 mendengar perkataan2 yang berguna dan kebajikan daripada orang yang bijaksana daripada segala ibarat dengan adab dan tertib sopan daripada gerak laku mereka itu.” (1980:39-40)

This statement reflects Salleh’s values and notion of beauty in writing. He holds social ethics and decorum in high regard, not only in writing but also in life generally. But what is his perception of the role and function of literature? Salleh has explained that he was exposed to certain works of Chinese literature and seems to have enjoyed reading it. But his main concern or motive for such reading is its relevance to his royal duties rather than for its literary functions or merit:

“dan lagi sangat gemar saya membaca hikayat2 Cina ialah terlebih asyik saya dengan dia iaitu hikayat yang bernama ‘Sam Kok’ karena hikayat itu banyaklah barang yang berfaedah dan kias ibarat yang harus didengar oleh pegawai2 yang mengerjakan pekerjaan raja2...(1980:42) [Underlining mine]

Thus, Salleh believes in the traditional function of literature as an instrument to serve his monarch, and thus such reading is interpreted as a part of his professional duty. His diary, recounting his trips to Japan and China, provides a good example of his writing done as part of his official responsibility to his monarch.

Salleh also gives his interpretation of the social function of literature, when he has to write to fulfil a request made by his Chinese friend, Na Tian Piet, to write about himself. This time, Salleh was socially motivated to write, but he describes it as a daunting task. Salleh feels that writing about himself is *"amat musykil"* (problematic) and *"berat lidah"* (difficult to express):

"berasa pada diri saya suatu perkara yang amat musykil dan berat lidah hendak menyebut dia." (1980:30)

There are several reasons for his reluctance. He remembers the saying of Lukman al-Hakim to his son on weaknesses of self-judgement or opinion:

"Hai anakku! Janganlah sekali2 engkau padakan matamu sendiri bagi melihat tubuhmu itu bahwa hendaklah engkau jaga akan segala mata yang lain yang tampak memandang seluruh tubuhmu itu dan segala cacat celamu tiada terlindung padanya. Karena kuasa matamu itu sehingga hidungmu sendiri yang berhampiran dengan dia tiada tampak dilihatnya" (1980:30)

Salleh also believes that it is only natural for a human being not to talk bad or truthfully or about oneself:

“karena adat setengah kehidupan manusia didalam dunia ini jaranglah mereka itu hendak menyebutkan dirinya hina atau bodoh dan dungu serta benci pula apabila didengarnya orang yang menyebut dia dengan nama demikian itu meskipun dirinya ada melakukan pekerjaan yang keji dan tiada benar itu sekalipun” (1980:30-31).

For this reason, he feels that it is not appropriate to write about himself and believes that we should let others be the judge of ourselves:

“nyatalah ditegah bagi seseorang itu menyebut dengan lidahnya akan keadaan dirinya sendiri biarlah tertinggal di dalam lidah mata dan telinga orang lain itulah hak yang sebenarnya.” (1980:30)

Salleh shows that he is well-aware of the Malay and Islamic ethos which prohibits self-promotion or glorification. Yet, inspite of that, he forces himself to write because he fears that to refuse his friend's request might be taken as a sign of insincerity:

“akan tetapi oleh hasrat dan hajat sahabat yang tulus ikhlas itu bahwa tiadalah patut memutuskan dia sebab itu saya gagahi jua pada memaksa diri saya dengan perkhabaran yang benar supaya terlepas diri saya daripada sangka sahabat tiada tulus ikhlas” (1980:31).

Caught in this dilemma and anxious to clear his conscience, Salleh suggests that his friend refer to others to get more information about him, in order to acquire more understanding and confidence in him:

“akan tetapi sungguhpun ikhtisar terlanjutlah jua wartanya supaya memberi cukup mengerti bagi pengetahuan sahabat mudah-mudahan dapat sahabat bertanya kepada orang lain pula supaya menetapkan yakin bagi sahabat.” (1980:31)

Salleh’s self-consciousness and dilemma are manifested not only in the early part of his letter, but also throughout the course of his writings. This part of the letter tend to become an apologia and justification for action taken, and such parts sometimes read rather awkwardly. For example, he justifies why he relates the development of Johor to him:

“Ya sahabatku, maafkan kiranya terlalulah panjangnya saya menulis kepada sahabat seolah2 menalak atau menyumpul sahabat yang berlebihan atau yang bukan daripada hajat maksud sahabat- bahkan kendatilah demikian- karena niat saya biarlah ada sedikit2 dalam pengetahuan sahabat hal2 negeri Johor itu daripada permulaan keadaannya itu dan masa terbukanya. Jika saya hendak menyatakan diri saya sahaja bagaimana maksud sahabat itu bahawa ta’dapat tiada melainkan terkaitlah pada menyebut Johor itu juga maka baharulah boleh menerangkan dia kepada maksud sahabat.” (1980:37)

Salleh also expresses his sense of guilt, yet attempts justification by interpreting his action as an act of trust between two close friends who are sharing their secret:

"Akan tetapi sesungguhnya demikian tegahan ariffin itu seolah2 diri saya sendiri pada waktu ini telah melanggar dan melalui daripada tegahannya itu- bahkan - benar demikian, tetapi ada suatu ambilan yang lain karena peri muhibah di antara sahabat dengan sahabatnya itu sememang2 tempat menumpahkan segala rahsianya karena baginya itu amanat maka baharulah dapat dikatakan sahabat." (1980:38)

Still, Salleh does not intend to impose his views upon the recipient of the letter and leaves it to his friend to form his own judgement about him:

"Lagipun seumpama saya membawa suatu dagangan dan sahabat itu saudagar yang kaya ta'dapatiada tentu dibeli juga dengan harga yang patut seperti kata 'ariffin: 'Bahwa jauhari itulah jua yang mengenal ma'nikam adanya." (1980:38)

After an initial stage of self justification, Salleh then goes on to describe his life. His achievements are mentioned, according to convention, with modesty and humility:

"Maka banyaklah lukisan2 saya yang kepada kipas itu ditangan setengah daripada sahabat saya itu yang didalam Singapura dan Johor sehingga dikirimkan kepada banyak sahabat2 yang dinegeri Cina. Maka bukannya pula lukisan saya itu karena moleknya melainkan sebab mereka itu suka memakai karena satu lukisan daripada bangsa lain yang meniru perbuatannya itu dapat diketengahkannya. Maka bukannya pula saya hendak bermegah atas yang demikian tidak sekali." (1980:43)

An example of Salleh's conventionally modest approach is when he seems to 'belittle' his achievement with a humourous comments on Malay warfare:

"Tetapi namanya sahaja perang bukan seperti perang bangsa orang putih dengan mendada mengadap musuh itu di antara satu dengan lainnya adapun perang Melayu ini perang penakut dengan menghendap dan berselindung segenap semak hutan dan batang kayu dan batang kelapa meskipun senapang itu gugup seperti bertih digoreng atau seperti Cina membakar petas hari sembahyangnya hanyalah menghabiskan obat peluru dengan sia2 sahaja seperti menembak angin tinggal jika ada peluru yang sesat dan sesiapa yang berajal ini tiada banyak mencacatkan jiwa hamba Allah Ta'ala." (1980:47)

Some of his achievements are only referred to in brief statements:

i. On his skills in surveying:

"Lebih tiga tahun maka peta negeri Johor itu pun sudah dan diaku oleh kepala2 tukang ukur di London betul ukurannya itu" (1980:44)

ii. On the Jementah war:

"maka hari inilah sahaja '30 Disember 1879' boleh dikatakan perang baharulah saya tampak laki2 panglima kita2 kita itu menentang seteru2nya dengan tidak masing2 itu menyadarkan dirinya." (1980:49)

iii. His academic achievement is given a passing mention:

"lagipun Tuan Keasberry itu pun telah mengetahui karena saya telah beberapa kali kena periksa di dalam sekolahnya itu oleh guru yang besar selalu saya mendapat hadiah dan kemenangan daripada anak2 sekolah yang lain sama ada daripada jalan tulis menulis dan karang mengarang ataupun kira2." (1980:34)

Salleh seems to avoid claiming credit for the achievements he describes. Instead, as a Muslim, he ascribes such successes to the power of God and he is always thankful and grateful to Him:

“saya mengucapkan beribu syukur kepada Tuhan yang maha besar itu oleh kemurahannya telah mengurniakan kehidupan saya berubah2 daripada satu zaman kepada zamannya seperti anak bulan yang baru terbit di awan udara itu daripada sehari kepada sehari dengan berubah sifat dan bertambah terang cuacanya- Amin!” (1980:41)

Salleh’s devout and philosophical attitude is manifested in his reaction to the problems of ‘slander’ faced by him and his family:

“Sungguhnyafakir beroleh keadaan pesona bagaimana yang tersebut di atas itu hal dunia hati perut fakir tidak sekali2 terlintas daripada hakikat yang baharu itu memberi bekas semuanya itu daripada Allah Subhanahu wa Ta’ala Tuhan yang amat mengasihi di atas hambanya dan membanyakkan mengucap syukur dan meminta ampun sekalian dosa tiap2 waktu sembahyang” (1980:17).

He rejects outright self-arrogance and pride:

“tiadalah sekali2 saya berani melakukan takbur dan sombong padanya” (1980:33)

In general, we may conclude that because of his socio-religious consciousness, any mention of self-achievement by him is done rather ‘indirectly’, briefly, with a sense of humour and modesty without any intention of imposing; and Salleh furthermore refers all his

achievements to God as the source and determinant of everything. Sweeney regards Salleh's characteristic style as conforming to the Malay ethos.

Generally, Salleh is an effective communicator for he is able to introduce himself, convey his life achievements and overcome the socio-religious constraints without breaking the socio-ethical conventions. Sweeney notes that *"while still maintaining his air of modesty, has almost imperceptibly told us that he was a brilliant student, a gifted linguist, a talented artist, a leading pioneer of the new Johor, an able and impartial administrator, and a noted battle commander!"* and *"at the same time, he has portrayed himself as a modest, erudite and sincere individual who can be relied upon to give an honest and reliable account."* (Sweeney 1980:30-32).

THE IMAGE OF THE RULER

When writing about his ruler, Salleh's writing differs greatly from the writing of traditional court scribes who usually glorify their ruler and mystify his existence. The image of the ruler reflected in his diary (and also in the personal life account), is far from the ideal image created in traditional literature for the Malay ruler, who possessed special power, *daulat*, and projected as a special being, above all people, the symbolic figure who has "public persona", but removed from the normal human behaviour. In his diary, Salleh describes his ruler as an ordinary man, who has his own idiosyncracies, fell sick on his journey just like others, and enjoys seeking personal fun and leisure during his trip. In his personal life account, Salleh subtly compares the characters of the two monarchs in terms

of their treatment of him. Salleh does not need to comment any further, for his statements alone are able to convey realistically the character of the rulers without any obvious value judgements. But he manages to deliver his message and is also able to gain sympathy from his readers for the mistreatment he received from the ruler. Salleh seems to make distinctions between serving the person (the ruler) and the ruler's office or throne. Hence, he would always be loyal to the ruler, regardless of his personality. Nevertheless, there is an absence of mystification of the royal image in his writing, though he upholds strongly and proudly his inherited role and duty to the ruler. Even Abdullah was not totally free from this tendency when referring to his own English ruler. This is one of the interesting aspects of his style.

How does Salleh manage to achieve his aims of presenting himself as the model Malay subject? We need to analyse his techniques of description and narration.

IMPERSONAL DESCRIPTION AND NON-REFLECTIVE NARRATIVE STYLE

Salleh does not make any overt personal comments or criticisms in his descriptions. They are purely objective descriptions or factual statements without value judgement, and we find only a few occasional remarks:

1. *petang dan malam sama dingin yang membawa sihat* (1980:52)
2. *hujan pun turun baharulah berasa nikmat di dalam kapal* (1980:53)
3. *ombak bertambah kuat saya tiada boleh bangun* (1980:53)

4. *siang pergi santap di rumah Tuan Hook jauh lima batu daripada bandar - disana penuh dengan buku indah2 (1980:55)*
5. *Pukul tujuh malam makan di hotel Jepun - disinilah dunia dan lanjut kesahnya (1980:56)*
6. *malamnya melalui Selat Ulu dan Iyo di sini banyak orang mandi bertelanjang (1980:56)*
7. *membawa Kebawah Duli naik diberi sebuah rumah yang mulia bagus cukup alat makan minum (1980:56)*
8. *Hari Ithnin 21 Mei - hari kita - kita sekalian di Kobe (1980:57)*
9. *pergi melihat castle kota maka di sinilah banyak penglihatan yang pelik (1980:57)*
10. *kolam tanaman yang indah2....seorang budak kira2 berumur 10 tahun membawa dan menyatakan tempat dan namanya dengan menyanyi dan suara yang molek (1980:59)*
11. *Governor Yokohama itu terlebih berbudi dan pandai tampaknya daripada lain2 governor yang telah dilawati (1980:62)*
12. *Kebawah Duli kurang - Alhamdullillah Syukur! (1980:64)*
13. *Kebawah Duli kurang geringnya. En. Mohd keras sangat sakitnya tetapi adalah di dalam kawal doktor yang pandai dan saya pun dalam keluhan kesah yang sangat (1980:65)*
14. *umurnya Chong Tok itu lebih daripada enam puluh tahun, orangnya pencakap besar (1980:67)*

15. *hari ini sentosa daripada segala gelombang dan segala mem2 pun telah berani di hadapan dan menghias diri di meja makan (1980:72)*

Sweeney describes his style of narration as impersonal, matter-of-fact and often laconic (Sweeney 1980:23). His impersonal statements and detailed information on time, distance, directions and weather, are based on his own direct observations on and close contact with his environment, and information received from the captain of the ship. Salleh's interest in local geography and his eye for detail, according to Sweeney, constantly remind us that he is a surveyor and cartographer. Sweeney also observes that Salleh shows less interest in current affairs, and rarely pauses to reflect and give us his impressions of his experiences (Sweeney 1980:25-26).

Why does Salleh not give any comments or make any criticisms? He is more interested in recording detailed information than pondering on the significance of the things he observes and experiences. Is the information more important to him? His diary is more a record book. Sweeney describes him as a dedicated diarist and deduces that Salleh's main concern is not to write a travelogue but to keep an accurate record of all his ruler's activities, and he would view such a record not merely as source for future reference, but also as a practical aid in the daily performance of his duties (Sweeney 1980:25-26).

His training as a clerk is clearly reflected in this diary and has influenced his orientation and focus of writing. He notices several unique aspects about the Japanese

people - their love for cultural and historical heritage and value in education, their courtesy and peaceful and orderly country, and social and economic conditions. But he never attempts to relate these observations to local situations, as would have been attempted by Abdullah. Critical writing is clearly not his interest. Salleh avoids making any criticism and restricts his observations to just mere reporting of events, and not his personal feelings, reactions and reflections, as expected in modern intimate diary. Maybe Salleh thought it was not proper for him to do so, for he was only following his master on an official trip and was not on personal business. Furthermore, the diary is mainly a personal reminder, or as a quick reference for his public duty,, and is not really intended for public consumption, or as a source of information on his personality. This lack or absence of an author's reflections and criticisms, however, has made his writing less forceful and insightful.

STYLE OF EXPRESSIONS AND METAPHORICAL LANGUAGE

Salleh uses three different styles of expression in the three types of writings. Each type of work has carefully chosen style to suit the specific purpose of his writing. The life account is rather direct, comprising an objective chronological account of important events of his life from birth to death. This matter-of-fact-style of writing shows his awareness of the importance of accurate documentation and precise dating to give an organised and thus "truthful" picture of himself, and this indirectly and subtly provides him with the best avenue to defend his "tarnished" image caused by the slanders which led to his forced retirement. He is successful in conveying the message that he and his family are only poor victims of a situation, who as loyal subjects and good Muslims are strong and willing

enough to accept such a predicament and challenge from God, without it at all affecting their sense of loyalty and duty to their ruler and country.

The metaphors are suitable and an effective means for delivering their meaning. In his letter, which is rather flowery and verbose, and contains about 14 metaphors. Perhaps Salleh finds that such a mode of expression is the best way for him to overcome his inner dilemma and to write about himself. He cannot be more direct in carrying out such heavy task. In fact this letter may be regarded as his best, or the most interesting work compared to the other two. Upon close analysis of the proverbs, we realize that Salleh is sensitive and creative in choosing the most suitable analogy to suit the background of his audience, the Chinese friend who was also a trader. Salleh uses a few analogies related to trading to describe himself:

'Seumpama membawa dagangan kepada saudagar yang kaya'(1980:38)

'Seumpama orang yang berniaga sehari makin menambah kelabaan' (1980:40)

The analogies used to describe his relationship to the state of Johor are also suitable, as they express his intended motives, and at the same time are effectively utilised to show his "modesty" (refer to Appendix 7:4,5). There are a few other metaphors in his diary and Salleh has created suitable analogies to describe clearly his trip, such as the condition of the ship and the sea.

His descriptions of several scenes or places of interest visited are also interesting.

The following example shows Salleh's skill in painting the scenery:

"pukul 4 1/2 pagi mulai masuk di kuala selat Shimashi, maka di sinilah kelihatan yang amat indah dan permai akan beberapa pulau bukit tinggi2 dan selat yang sempit berpasir putih diselang pula pulau2 itu dengan hijauan2 huma orang Jepun itu di atasnya beberapa sampan pengail dan tampak pondo' kecil2. Angin timur laut yang terlalu dingin lebih daripada yang sudah2 dirasa." (1980:56)

His description of the stormy ship is far from the wordy conventional style. It not only precise but also expressive:

"Hari Rabu 31 Oktober pagi2 ini angin makin kuat berkatalah kapten dan mualim kapal ini taifun akan sampai kepada kita ada kira2 pukul delapan mulai tiba burung itu dengan menggoyangkan kapal itu tertutuplah segala pintu palka - maha suci Tuhan yang menjadikan kapal sebesar itu tiadalah dikecualikannya sehingga berjalanlah dengan maharaja lela di dalam gelombang yang pergi datang di atas dek kapal itu dan terlebih banyak haluan kapal itu di dalam air daripada di atas air sehingga gelombang itu melalui di atas ceteri kapal itu. Muntah lilah berak cair menjadi bedak langirlah kapal itu daripada segala Cina yang menambang itu." (1980:71)

FAVOURITE IMAGERY

- "Ombak Di Tengah Segara" (Waves of Life In the Royal Sea)

Salleh uses the image of "ombak" or "gelombang" (wave) several times in his autobiography, particularly in his letter and diary. In the diary, "wave" is used as one of his subjects for "*pembayang*" (foreshadowing) in his *pantun*:

*Dari jauh tampak sekerat
jauh ke tengah diarung segara
Selamat di laut selamat di darat
berkati kami menziarahi negara*

*Segara agung ombak tak lena
bahagian daripada lautan Pasifik
Berkati kami menziarahi negara
meninggalkan Johor ke negeri Cina*

*Bahagian daripada lautan Pasifik
berbagai musimnya tenang dan gelora
Anugerahkan kami hadiah taufik
hingga sampai ke Pulau Indera*

*Terutama musimnya angin taifun
geloranya besar sudah masyhur
Itu bernama Pulau Jepun
peliharakan rajaku berkati Johor
(1980:51)*

Salleh is attracted by the nature of waves. He finds that the size and movement of waves (*ombak* or *gelombang*) depends on the size of the sea (*segara*). Thus the bigger the sea, the more active and restless are its waves (*segara agung, ombak tak lena!*). This observation later influences him to select similar images to symbolize the relationship between Johor and himself as expressed in the letter. However, his interpretation and use of such metaphors are rather common, without any particular new meaning attached to them.

Perhaps the only fresh element is that they are used to describe the close attachment and interdependence of life between a loyal subject and his ruler.

Salleh has shown that he can easily and effectively change his style of expression to suit his purpose, situation and his audience. He changes his form of self-reference accordingly in three different discourses, from "*fakir*" and "*patik*" in the Life Account, to "*saya*" and "*ku*" in his letter and diary. Salleh's style can be flowery or simply brief and precise in his accounts. He is in full control of his language and has shown effective mastery in the use of language or communication, as well as in its literary use.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

TDBLJ tells us about the life of an eminent figure in the late 19th and early 20th centuries of Malay history. The text consists of three different types of writing, but all projecting an individual life within a feudal framework of conventions. The main distinct feature of Salleh's work is that it portrays his life as that of a typical traditional Malay subject who sees his own life only in relation to his Ruler. The author strongly states that the main purpose of his life is to serve his ruler, the inherited role and status which he cherishes and is proud to perform. He only finds goal and meaning in life by being loyal and efficient in serving the throne, irrespective of the personality of his ruler. His life's achievements are only measured by the sense of appreciation and recognition rendered upon him by the ruler. This is the message of his works and the personal image intended by the author. He is well aware of the fact that it is cultural taboo and religious prohibition to indulge in any form of

self-glorification, self-pride or even simply to talk about oneself. On the other hand, he feels that he needs to talk about himself and provides a defence for his tarnished image and the mistreatment he and his family suffered from an unfair ruler.

Therefore, Salleh has employed creatively several literary devices to reconcile these conflicting forces. He has to justify his act by telling us that he had to be prompted, and it was not an easy task to break with tradition to reveal himself; and as a truly loyal subject, he had always devoted all his life to his king and would always continue so, and that whatever had happened to him and his family his sense of loyalty was still strong and undisturbed. To prevent from any accusation of self-righteous, he has to let others to be the better judge of himself, and has submitted to God for the final judgement of everything. Generally, because of his writing skills, he has projected a positive self image, thus redeems his tarnished status, and preserves the social ethos within the feudal traditions. Through his mastery of language, literary expressions and full understanding of the Malay ethos and Islamic modesty, Salleh has managed to reconcile and even synthesized various conflicting elements, between the self and societal interests, and hence has produced an interesting autobiographical account.

COMPARISON TO ABDULLAH

Salleh informs us of his relationship with Abdullah, who was his teacher. Abdullah had identified his language skills and recommended him to Keasberry so that he could be

employed to teach at the school. Salleh stayed at Abdullah's house and learned about "surat2 Inggeris" (English letters) from Abdullah.

"pergi belajar ke sekolah itu bersama2 dengan guru yang kedua mengajar di Bukit Zion namanya En. 'Abdullah anak Pulau Pinang kerana ialah yang mengaku kepada Tuan Keasberry itu yang saya boleh menjadi guru di dalam surat2 Melayu itu..." (1980:34)

"duduklah mengajar di sana diam di dalam rumah guru saya yang tersebut itu di Arab Street Kampung Gelam siang mengajar di sekolah malam saya belajar kepada guru saya surat2 Inggeris menghubungkan pelajaran saya." (1980:34)

Salleh taught and studied for four months before the conflict between Temenggong Daing Ibrahim and Tengku Ali, the son of Sultan Hussein occurred, which led to his own conflict with his father, who did not permit him to teach in Kampung Gelam. This finally resulted in the termination of Salleh's studies under Abdullah and his teaching career, which really upset him:

"maka jadilah diri saya pada waktu itu seumpama orang tengah berjalan deras terantu' tulang kering melainkan Allah sahaja yang tahu sebalnya" (1980:35)

Unlike Abdullah, who was by nature more "non-conformist" and hence sought support from his white friends to back him up and convince his father, Salleh was rather submissive to his parents' request:

“Tetapi apa boleh buat karena kita satu anak wajib ta’at menurut sebarang perintah ibubapa dan tuan penghulu ta’usah kata diberhentikan daripada pekerjaan yang demikian jika umpamanya hendak disuruh terjun ke dalam laut atau ke dalam api sekalipun mesti kita ta’at adanya.” (1980:35)

Both Abdullah and Salleh shared similar concerns about and an appreciation of the importance of language. Salleh learned Chinese no matter how difficult it was to him; and he also showed some appreciation of his Chinese friend’s competence in Malay. He also showed an interest in and made an effort to learn English at Keasberry’s school and from Abdullah.

Beside the reference to the English language, there is no direct statement in the text to show that Abdullah influenced Salleh’s literary knowledge and style of writing. However, we may assume that based on their close contact and relationship, Salleh must have been aware of Abdullah’s works and might have read them. Sweeney notices echoes of the *Hikayat Abdullah* in Salleh’s references to his touchstone (*batu uji*) and the saying *“It takes a jeweler to know a gem”*. However, he is of the opinion that such influences are very minor in the context of the whole (1980:18). Nevertheless, a close analysis of Salleh’s writing shows that there are a few other similarities or parallels between their works. For example, Salleh also addresses his friend as *“kekasih”*:

“ke hadapan majlis sahabat dan kekasih saya Tuan Na Tian Piet” (1980:29)

He also describes his childhood suffering in learning:

“tetapi dalam masa saya mengaji Kur’an itu lebih lagi saya menanggung kesusahan dan keberatan: pertama2 mengerjakan guru, kedua berkhidmat akan kerja ibu saya.”
(1980:33)

His description of Singapore island before the arrival of the British and his praise for the *Temengung*’s contribution in abolishing piracy reminds us of the similar description found in the *Hikayat Abdullah*:

“karena jasa al-Marhum itu sangat banyak pada government Inggeris oleh menangkap dan membunuh beberapa perompak2 yang jahat yang selalu menyusahkan orang2 dagang sepanjang laut yang hendak masuk ke Singapura itu karena masa baharu2 orang Inggeris membuka Pulau Singapura itu perompak2 itu seperti anak ayam sahaja bermengendap[=bersengendap] segenap tokong pulau yang berhampiran dengan Pulau Singapura itu maka sekalian itu dengan tiada berapa lama telah dihapuskan oleh orang2 al-Marhum itu sehingga tertinggallah laut itu dengan aman.” (1980:39).

However, there are significant differences between their works, even though there are only 46 years between them. Abdullah in his autobiography has to break with social conventions and the Malay ethos to introduce and glorify himself. Salleh is also ego-centred, but he manages to project himself without even shaking the ethos. Instead, he has reconciled two conflicting elements, self vs society, synthesized them rather elegantly, and

introduced a harmonious self-and-society style in his autobiographical writing. The difference between both authors is summarized as following:

LITERARY COMPARISON

ABDULLAH

1. radical innovation, self-glorification vs social criticism (anti-thesis)
2. language weakness
3. greater self-reflection and strong personal judgement
4. Mystification of image of his king
5. literary talents/skills: clear & full awareness, knowledge, great commitment and dedication to produce as personal function an author

SALLEH

1. introducing self-perspective within the conventions (synthesis)
2. language strength, mastery or flexibility
3. less self-reflection more judgement-free
4. more realistic account of his king but still mystification of loyalty and feudal tradition
5. glimpse of literary commitment as pure literature, writing more as official and social duty than literary work and image

Conclusions

As discussed in an earlier chapter, though Abdullah is weak in Malay language and insensitive to the Malay ethos, with his strong reflective ability, greater literary awareness,

dedication and commitment to achieve his own personal aims, he has actually brought radical changes to the development of Malay literature.

On the other hand, Salleh has greater language skills, and has shown great literary potential and knowledge and understanding of the Malay ethos. Unfortunately, his life goals and concerns are only to serve his royal master and he has utilised his literary potential mainly for this purpose. This has overshadowed and restricted his literary performance to the limits imposed by his official duties and responsibilities. Salleh, however, has learned from his teacher of the importance of self, but at the same time he realizes that within his circles, this cannot be expressed at the expense of society. Thus, he has modified the expression of self according to the received social values. Thus, he has synthesized two major but conflicting elements (self-and-society) which have been radically challenged before hand by Abdullah. From the perspective of self-and-society, Salleh, therefore, has restored Malay literature to a balanced or harmonious state of coexistence, as had earlier has been explored and attained by Fakhir Saghir and Raja Ali Haji and Raja Ahmad.

Looking from the point of view of the general development of Malay literature, Abdullah's and Salleh's roles are very much complementary. Abdullah has anti-thesized the literary tradition by putting self-above-society. Salleh develops Abdullah's innovation by synthesizing both elements of self and society, hence contributing a significant development to Malay literature; and at the same time his work proves that in the Malay world of the nineteenth century, the gravity force of society is too strong to be pushed aside for long by

the force of the inner ego, after the attempt made by Abdullah. However, by continue to write about his own self, Salleh, is actually following in Abdullah's footsteps, and even the earlier attempts made by Hamzah Fansuri, Lauddin, Ahmad Rijaluddin, Fakih Saghir and Raja Ali Haji. Therefore, we need to reevaluate the popular view that Abdullah has no followers and was only an isolated phenomenon in Malay literature.

Appendix 6

Part 1 (Summary of Important events of his life)

1. 1841 - His birth
2. 1856 - 15 yrs- clerk to Encik Long
3. 1858 (3 oct) - clerk at Iskandar Puteri
4. 1861 - learned Chinese language and art
5. 1868 (9 dec) - became chief of police
6. ? - learned surveying
7. 25.10.1879 - Jementah War
2.12.79 - leader in war
8. 28.4.1883 - 9.10.1883 - accompanied the ruler on a trip to to China and Japan
9. 24.5.1855 - Abu Bakar visited England
10. 1886 - Abu Bakar returned with a new title as Sultan of Johor
13 Feb - official announcement of his title
11. 3.3.1886 - He received the title: Datuk Bentara Luar
12. 1887 - opening of Muar
13. 28.11.1889 - helped to solve the border conflict between Malacca and Johor.
Gunung Ledang was included in Johor territory
14. 1891 - Slander problem in Cohong and had to move to Batu Pahat
15. 1892 - He advised the king on the feasibility of opening Endau.

16. 1893 -He opened and developed Batu Pahat without financial support from the sultan
17. 1895 - Ruler was ill and went to London
He died in London (1312/1895) and was buried in Johor on 8.9.1895
18. 1879 - slander problem in Batu Pahat
19. 1.5.1899 - letter from Sultan requesting to take over his house.
5.5.1899 - he went to the ruler to submit the grant
20. 1899 - helped to solve the border issue between Pahang and Johor.
21. 10.10.99 - Ruler instructed him to supervise Muar and Batu Pahat
22. 3.4.1909 - letter from D.S.Amar Diraja Encik Abdul Rahman bin Andak informing him about his retirement and visit to London
23. 12.3.1910 - visit to check on Batu Pahat following rumours and slander about him
24. 2.5.1912 - He was asked to resign
25. 1.6.1912 - His son's resignation
26. 21.7.1915 - his death and burial at Bukit Mahmudiah Johor Baharu on 22.7.1915 at the age of 74

Appendix 7

Proverbs and Metaphors in TDBLJ (1980)

Letter

1. *Mustahillah semut itu jemu akan gula dan manisan (1980:29)*
2. *Seumpama orang tengah berjalan deras terantuk tulang kering (1980:35)*
3. *Umpamanya hendak disuruh terjun ke dalam laut atau ke dalam api sekalipun (1980:35)*
4. *Seumpama air dengan gelombang jua adanya (1980:37)*
5. *laksana sepohon pokok yang menjalar menumpang melilit segenap dahan dan cawang sepohon kayu yang besar (1980:37)*
6. *Lidah itu menteri hati ghalibnya (1980:38)*
7. *Seumpama membawa suatu dagangan kepada saudagar yang kaya (1980:38)*
8. *Bahwa jauhari itulah jua yang mengenal manikam adanya (1980:38)*
9. *Seumpama orang yang berniaga sehari makin menambah kelabaan (1980:40)*
10. *Seperti duduk dikedai orang berjual minyak bahuan2 (1980:40)*
11. *Seperti duduk di rumah pandai besi, jika tiada kena recik api itu pada nya nescaya asap itu terbang dan memedihkan matanya (1980:40)*
12. *Seperti anak bulan yang baharu terbit di awan udara (1980:40)*
13. *Seumpama pohon kayu yang baharu tumbuh di muka bumi (1980:42)*
14. *Seperti bunyi kawan kumbang sahaja (1980:49)*

Diary

1. *Muntah lilah berak cair menjadi bedak langirlah atas kapal (1980:71)*
2. *Laut seperti dalam dulang (1980:72)*

CHAPTER 11

A COMPARISON AND OVERVIEW OF THE SEVEN AUTHORS

In chapters 4 to 10, we have analysed the works of seven authors: Hamzah Fansuri, Laudin, Ahmad Rijaluddin, Fakih Saghir, Abdullah, Raja Ali Haji and Raja Ahmad, and Salleh Perang. All the authors have produced distinct text(s) which manifest different concepts of literature and authorship, and the notion of self.

Self, Power and Patronage

All the seven authors have responded to the immediate contemporary political challenges of their days. They have focused on self, with the ruling power and local political turmoils faced as a result of western intrusion - such as those of the Dutch, English and Portugese colonial power - forming the background to their narratives. These authors have given their personal interpretations of the impact of those external powers. Interestingly, they have treated and presented these external powers and the current political challenges of their time according to their own aims, by using the traditional notion of loyalty and conventional terms of expression.

In the *Hikayat Raja Pasai* and *Hikayat Hang Tuah*, we find conflicts of interest between *Sultan* and his *rakyat*. These conflicts are treated as a acts of rebellion on the part of a member of the *rakyat* against his king, which in the conventions was described as *durhaka* (treason). *Hikayat Raja Pasai* and *Hikayat Hang Tuah* a view of loyalty from the top, from the perspective of the king. On the other hand, Lauddin describes his father's

conflict with the ruling power (*Sultan*), but from the perspective of an individual member of the *rakyat*. Thus, the conventional themes of loyalty and *durhaka* (treason), have been given a religious perspective and new interpretation by Lauddin. The author of the *Hikayat Nakhoda Muda* has challenged the conventional concepts of loyalty and *durhaka* by raising more fundamental moral issues and values: personal rights and self-integrity. His protagonist's sense of loyalty is guided by human rights and integrity, and he strongly believes that it is his duty as a member of the *rakyat* to serve and be loyal to his *sultan* as long it does not jeopardize his principles. Nakhoda Muda's resistance against the ruling power is a rational and practical reaction within the context of his situation. He has to leave the existing system, which is a potential threat to his own life and to his people's safety, to seek protection from another political power. His tragic death and the suffering of his family and people was almost too painful to endure, but the value of individual integrity and human rights versus cruelty and injustice is too high to be sacrificed. Lauddin has portrayed his father, the protagonist of his biography, as an upright and honest man, whose religious spirit and status as trader, influenced his courageous action against the feudal system, even though it led to great sufferings for him and the whole family. Lauddin's pride in his father's actions and achievements has motivated him to write the account of his father's life.

Ahmad Rijaluddin describes his impressions of his journey to Benggala, the capital city of the British Empire in the nineteenth century. His travelogue offers a unique insight into the mind of a colonialisised person towards his colonial ruler and the impact of the colonial city on its life. On the surface, there does not seem much conflict of power portrayed in his writing, as Ahmad Rijaluddin is full of admiration for all things British. All efforts made by other political powers to challenge the the power of the British were easily

overcome, and the author illustrates clearly, and even monotonously, the supremacy of the British Empire as the major World power. At a personal level, Ahmad shows his admiration for and devotion to his British raja and his great kingdom. The British are his patrons and it is to them that he devotes his praise. Ahmad's work is more significant if seen from the perspective of city life. Ahmad has explored life in a big city, and as far as we know, his travelogue may be the earliest account of the subject in Malay literature. Ahmad expresses his personal feelings and observations, particularly when he encounters prostitutes and other beautiful women in the city of Calcutta. He writes explicitly on the theme of women and prostitution, but gives a value-free treatment on the subject, and hence displays a neutral attitude on the moral function of literature.

Fakih Saghir provides us with a distinct historical and literary document which describes the religious conflicts and power struggles between two Islamic factions in Minangkabau, Sumatra, one of which sought the external military intervention. The author presumably wrote his statement to explain and justify his request for assistance from the Dutch Company to support his own group against the other faction. From a literary point of view, the text is an apologia to the Minangkabau people for his action. In order to persuade his intended readers (the Minangkabau people) and proclaimed readers (the Dutch), he has to project a strong image of himself and his father, the leaders of one of the groups, but at the same time the author is aware of cultural and religious prohibitions on self-glorification.

All the authors constantly faced conflicts when confronting political power and society, and their writings manifest the ways in which they solved these self-and-society conflicts. Perhaps in Malay society of that time, the force of social and religious

conventions was so great that these authors could not simply ignore them in their pursuit of personal fulfillment. The authors seem to feel that the best way to deal with this problem is by mastering and utilizing social and religious forms of expression effectively, as reflected in the Malay proverbs: '*tari mengikut gendang*' (dance to the music) or '*bagai menarik rambut dari tepung*' (like pulling out the hair without disturbing the flour, which simply means solving without destroying); and by showing that their works are written mainly for the good of society. Thus, with the exception of Ahmad Rijaluddin, all these authors have to display social sensitivity and a great knowledge of *adat* and *adab* (culture and religion) to show that they are a cultured elite who have mastered the language (*tahu bahasa*), customs or culture (*tahu adat*) and religion (*tahu agama*). These are the main expectations of the society towards them - an author or man of letters (*pengarang* or *sasterawan*) as custodian of culture and religion; these are conventional authorial functions and challenges that they are expected to accept and fulfill. The author, as a truly modern person in his own culture and time, has to have enough self-knowledge and self-confidence to blend harmoniously and effectively his own interests and his social responsibilities. This harmony between self and society is highly valued and aimed for by these authors, though not all are successful in doing so. Some of these authors have shown that they are able to face the challenges and fulfill the expectations without jeopardizing their own interests and purposes. Some authors, such as Raja Ali Haji and Raja Ahmad, Fakih Sagir and Salleh Perang, through their mastery and creative treatment of conventions, are not only able to achieve their personal objectives, but more interestingly, they manage to project an image of themselves as champions of their society.

The author of the *Surat Keterangan Sheikh Jaluddin* offers an interesting solution to this inner conflict, through his subtle and creative projection of self within the accepted cultural-religious ethos and conventions of Malay society. The solution adopted by the author is the projection of harmony between self-and-society.

Similar tactics were also adopted by Raja Ali Haji and Raja Ahmad and Salleh Perang. The authors of the *Tuhfat al-Nafis* have provided us with a historical documentation and personal interpretation of the relationship between the Malays and the Bugis in the Malay world. This political narrative offers a Buginese interpretation of history, written to counter versions found in earlier Malay texts, the *Peringatan Sejarah Negeri Johor* and the *Siak Chronicle*. The authors have legitimized the Buginese intervention in the Malay world and have subtly allocated to Buginese a higher position of power and honour than the Minangkabau people, their main rivals. By their creative interpretation of the conventional theme of loyalty, the authors have denied all the power claims by the earlier narratives in favour of the Malays and the Siak people. The authors have reinterpreted history and the conventional theme of loyalty to fulfill their ideological motives of justifying Bugis intervention in Malay political affairs and to meet the political challenges of their time. This is cleverly achieved without jeopardizing the Malay ethos and conventions, and they even manage to project positive image of themselves as the champions of culture and religion.

Salleh Perang has also achieved harmony between self interest and his professional duty to his raja and the cultural expectations of his people. His autobiography is indeed a continuation of exploratory attempts made earlier by Hamzah Fansuri, Fakhir Sagir and Abdullah Munsyi to write one's own life story. Salleh has given us an account of an

individual life in court circles. The author intended to portray his life as that of a typical traditional Malay subject who sees his own life only in relation to his king. He strongly believes that the main purpose of his life is to serve his king, a long inherited role which he cherishes and is nothing but proud to perform. His development and downfall are only measured by the sense of appreciation and recognition rendered him by the king. He is well aware of the cultural taboo and religious prohibition against any form of self-glorification, arrogance or even simply talking about oneself. But he needs to talk about himself in self-defence, because of his tarnished image and the mistreatment which he and his family suffered from the unfair ruler. Salleh has selected the conventional theme of loyalty and re-emphasized its conventional meaning from a top-down perspective. He has creatively employed several conventional literary devices, such as *wasiat*, *pantun* and proverbs, to reconcile these conflicting forces, and through his mastery of language, literary expressions and full understanding of Malay ethos and Islamic modesty, he has achieved his objectives. He has redeemed his social standing and projected a positive self image, but the social ethos and the feudal tradition are strongly preserved.

Abdullah has provided us with an account of the important events of his life, which are narrated and developed together with accounts of the British rulers or the British colonial powers in the Straits Settlements, particularly in Malacca and Singapore. His *Hikayat* portrays two strands of lives: his own and those of the British, which are parallel to each other, but crisscross at certain stages of his life through his personal involvement with some eminent British personalities. Abdullah aims to project a positive image of himself as an author, language teacher and learned and religious man, and to glorify the supreme and multi-dimensional powers of his king and kingdom (the British colonial rulers and their

supreme empire) in politics, military matters and in the fields of knowledge and technology. To him, this could be done effectively by providing an opposite or counter image of the Malay rulers and local peoples which immediately served to reinforce the positive self image he intended. Thus, he consistently and simultaneously projects these two contrasting images throughout his narration. Abdullah's binary opposition technique clearly reflects his strong convictions but rather simple moral judgements and categorisations adopted in order to resolve the moral conflicts in his life. In contrast to other authors, such as Fakhir Saghir, Raja Ali Haji and Raja Ahmad, and Salleh Perang, who somehow manage to project positive self-images without jeopardizing the prevailing cultural and religious ethos, even though Abdullah continues to use conventional terms of expression, he has glorified himself by degrading the image of his society; hence he has put himself above society.

Hamzah is different because he has written about *Sufism* and, has chosen the Divine Power (God or Self) instead of human political power. As an author, he is interested in a totally different notion of power and self in Malay literature. Throughout his works, he explores the Ultimate meaning of life and beauty. To him, God is the Ultimate Power, Existence and Beauty, and the noble task and purpose of an author and literature is to explore and discover the Hidden Treasure and to devote his personal experience and creativity to Him. Hamzah has shown that there need not be any demarcation or dualism between author's life and his own writings. His writings and life are not distinct entities, but one. The value of his work and life depends on the result of the search for the meeting with his Ultimate Creator, the Ultimate Love and Beauty and the effective guidance it provides to direct others to His Path. To Hamzah, we can serve self (ego) and also others (society) through self-negation and finally by union with Self (God). Only through this

union of self-Self, can man achieve his purpose in life and attain the full meaning of his existence. However, the nature of the subject is too abstract and complex to describe. Thus, following other sufi authors, he needs to focus on his own self and personal experience to illustrate the sufi concepts. Perhaps this is Hamzah's personal response to the political challenges of his time, where the court held great influence and the king was strongly perceived by his people as an absolute power. Thus Hamzah's reaction to such a feudal philosophy is to inform and instruct the king and his people about the Divine Power and the absolute truth in life.

We find that though self is the focus of their narratives, the authors hardly write about their families. Lauddin and Fakihi Sagir write about their fathers because they are the protagonists of their narratives. Abdullah gives very little information on his own family, and that is mainly on his grandmother, wife and daughter, Siti Lela. There is no mention of his sons or even of his wife's name. Raja Ali Haji describes his father, Raja Ahmad, indirectly and in a matter-of-fact way. Salleh Perang briefly describes his parents when he was a child and mentions his son's resignation from his official post. Hamzah Fansuri and Ahmad Rijaluddin do not provide any information on their families. The descriptions of their families are essentially anecdotal, and not an intimate account of personal or private matters. Perhaps information on families is regarded as either too personal for these authors or simply unnecessary. From our analysis of their works, we may see that they are able to achieve their personal aims without exposing their family to their audience and patrons. If they do reveal a certain amount of information on their families, as in the cases of Abdullah, Raja Ali Haji and Salleh Perang, this is done with specific personal aims and objectives.

There are two interesting types of literary patronage enjoyed by these authors-the heavenly and the secular. Lauddin, Ahmad Rijaludin, Fakhir Saghir and Abdullah produced their works as a result of direct, personal contact with westerners or at the request of westerners. So, basically, their works were written for a specific "client", or with certain intended readers in mind, or primarily to cater for their western patron. Yet, even though these authors produced their works for their Western secular patrons, each one of them wrote their piece in an Islamic religious spirit. In the case of the *Tuhfat al-Nafis* and *Tarikh Datu' Bentara Luar Johor*, the authors themselves were the court patrons, and wrote to defend and protect their own interests either as a member of the ruling elite (the Bugis rulers in the Johor-Riau kingdom or *Yam Dipertuan Muda of Riau*), or as a fallen feudal leader (*Datuk Bentara Luar* of Johor). Hamzah, on the other hand, represents the *ulama* group, who, even though they served as religious consultants to the *Istana* of Aceh, managed to preserve the independent tradition of religious writing of *Kitab* literature. Hamzah's patron is a heavenly one, God. A close analysis of the types and nature of literary patronage, and especially the emergence of western patrons, reveals rapid social and political changes in the Malay world during this period. It reflects the direct impact of colonialisation on the development of Malay literature.

Concepts of Literature and Authorship

- Innovations Within the Framework of Conventions

All the authors display a strong sense of individuality in their attitude towards writing, audiences and conventions, as manifest in their concept of authorship. They have chosen their own experiences or those of someone close to them (such as their own fathers, as in the cases of Lauddin and Fakhir Saghir) as the focus of their writing. So, besides religion,

real-life or personal experiences also become the basis of truth or validity for their words or accounts. These authors are indeed conscious as individuals when writing about their own experiences or self, and have deliberately projected certain aspects of their individual personalities, to achieve their personal aims.

Besides awareness of self, the authors show great awareness and knowledge of the current issues which directly affect them and their families, rulers and society. All these issues are dealt with in the course of their writings. The social background or status of the authors indicate that they are educated, privileged class of society. They come from the royal circle (Raja Ali Haji, Raja Ahmad and Salleh Perang), *ulama* group (Hamzah Fansuri and Fakihi Saghir), educational elite (Ahmad Rijaluddin and Abdullah) or business class (Lauddin). They have responded to the political and social challenges of their time and recorded their observations, interpretations and reflections on historical events for others to read, share and learn from.

Therefore, the functions of literature, as seen by these authors, are both personal and social. These authors use their writing as an instrument for expressing their own interests and purposes as individuals, as well as in order to serve their social responsibilities to society. We have observed how these authors have attempted to reconcile these two conflicting roles or functions in their treatment of self. Not all the authors achieve harmony in the relationship between self and society. Lauddin, Fakihi Saghir, Raja Ali Haji and Raja Ahmad, and Salleh Perang, attain their personal aims within the bounds of accepted norms and conventions of society though stretching them in the process. On the other hand, even though Abdullah attempts to identify himself strongly with Malay language and religion,

and to show concern for Malay affairs and problems, his projection of self and self-glorification is too imposing for the Malays judged by their usual ways of self expression. This is simply because Abdullah has not mastered the skills of “humility” or “self-effacement”, as well as the others. Ahmad Rijaluddin has no moral or religious pretensions; he just aims his descriptions and boasts at a specific audience, his circle of close friends in a *warung kopi* (a coffee stall).

The authors show their knowledge of the conventions, but more importantly, they have adapted and recreated them by making their own use of these conventions. We find a greater degree of free and creative use of the conventions in their works compared to the rigid, formulaic applications by other authors.

For instance, one important conventional literary element in traditional literature is the theme of loyalty. This theme is also addressed by some of the authors, but with varying interpretations according to their notion of self in the domain of power. Their interpretations are rather different from the single, top-down, conventional definition of loyalty found in the canon of traditional literature such as the *Sejarah Melayu*. Lauddin interprets the concept of loyalty from the perspective of an individual member of the *rakyat*; Raja Ali Haji and Raja Ahmad cleverly reinterpret this Malay theme of loyalty to defend and further Bugis interests; while on the other hand, Ahmad Rijaluddin and Abdullah reaffirm their sense of loyalty, but to their British rulers. Salleh Perang continues expressing this sense of loyalty, but in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century Malay feudal system of the State of Johor.

The authors use and redefine elements of convention as literary tools for their personal purposes. For example, colophons, in the *Mukadimah*, *wasiat* (dying injunction), traditional forms of self-reference (such as '*fakir*' and '*yang empunya cerita*'), *pantuns*, *syair*, proverbs, religious quotations, dreams, myths and superstitious elements etc. have been used in their texts, but with slightly different meanings and with specific personal interpretations. Some of these authors are more creative and effective than the others. We find superstitious elements and mythical thoughts, in Abdullah's *Hikayat*. Abdullah selects and inserts those elements to reinforce the positive image of himself and his British rulers, but it creates a rather paradoxical literary impact, as it contradicts the image of a rational and enlightened man that he intends to project for himself. Ahmad Rijaluddin's work is an interesting example: in his case, we find that author was faced by a totally new external stimulus, the big city of Calcutta, which could have inspired him to express himself more freely and independently than the other authors; yet he perceived this new experience from a purely conventional frame of mind, and his mode of expression of personal feelings is based on the traditional model of the *Panji tales*. Of all the authors, Ahmad is the least successful, as he has not mastered well the necessary skills and tools.

We observe different forms of language and varying levels of linguistic skills among these authors. The authors who are *ulamas*, such as Hamzah Fansuri, Fakhir Saghir and Raja Ali Haji and his father, use Arabic and Islamic terminology and phrases. Hamzah's works include a large amount of religious terminology but he creatively uses this in a Malay way, hence maintaining the purity of the Malay language. The authors' cultural backgrounds also determine their language used. Lauddin and Fakhir Saghir are Minangkabau authors, and they have included Minangkabau words and expressions in their works. Abdullah and Raja

Ali Haji also use some English words in their works. Conventional terms of expressions, such as Malay proverbs, metaphors and court or *istana* terms of expression are commonly used by most of the writers, such as Ahmad Rijaluddin, Abdullah, Salleh Perang, Raja Ali Haji, Fakhir Saghir and even Lauddin, but each uses these differently. Lauddin and Fakhir Saghir, for example, are rather careful in their use of conventional expressions to create certain forms of narrative impact in their writings. Lauddin even uses informal language in a certain part of his biography. Abdullah uses proverbs and metaphors excessively; on the other hand, Ahmad does not use language creatively and merely rigidly follows its formulaic forms of expression.

Generally, we can say that these authors skillfully use conventional terms of expression and literary devices to achieve their personal objectives, and to project and reinforce a positive self image. The authors seem to believe that despite the new political challenges of their time, the conventions still have significance, and they have creatively reused them in their own interests.

We observe that there is great discourse on the authorial role, and the functions and objectives of writing. Among these authors, Hamzah Fansuri, Abdullah and Raja Ali Haji, are more conscious of and explicit about their role as an author. Hamzah sees the role of an author as a seeker of Ultimate Love and Beauty. He gives a personal perspective and meaning to writing and literature. Hamzah also emphasizes the author's individual right to his intellectual property, and his right to protect it from the claims and abuses of others. He also regards his writings as completed works, not like other conventional texts which are treated as being open and flexible, and which can be changed and recomposed by other

authors. Raja Ali Haji and Raja Ahmad discuss the criteria of good writing (*sahih, patut* and *wadiah*). They also emphasize the importance of consulting other texts and sources, the intertextuality approach, before arriving at their own statements. But Raja Ali Haji and Raja Ahmad conclude their work by inviting other future writers to improve on their text. Thus, they are returning to the earlier notion of open and flexible joint-authorship of conventional literature. The discourse reaches a conceptual level in the *Hikayat Abdullah*. Abdullah provides us with discussions on the concept of writing as a craft (*ketukangan*), the essential tools (*perkakas*) for an author to perform as craftman (*tukang*), and the main functions and benefits of writing; and he even describes his own process of writing as a model of a writer at work.

These authors have a clear and conscious idea in mind of their target audience, whether as proposed or as intended or postulated readers (see **Table 4** for details). The background and difference in the proposed and intended readership also influences the features of their writing. These authors refer more to their audience as readers rather than as listeners. They express more awareness that the needs, expectations and responses of their audiences must be addressed by authors. They know that their readers are critical and will not simply accept their words. These authors realize that they need to earn the respect of their readers and to prove the validity and authority of their words. Only by showing social knowledge, sensitivity, humility and religious awareness can they earn their respect and hence acceptance. Their concern for readers' responses indicates that these authors still value social acceptance and legitimacy for their work, and writing to them is not just for personal expression and individual fulfillment. Only through their readers' acceptance can they achieve their personal aims and purposes.

Therefore, we observe a significant difference between these authors and their Western counterparts (as discussed in chapter 2). Both groups of writers have similar aims - writing as an expression of individuality and personality, and for the betterment of society, but they differ in the methods or means used to achieve those aims. Western writers, as discussed in Chapter Two, are prepared to shock society and face social rejection or personal risks in the pursuit of personal aims. We find a similarity between Abdullah and the western writers in this respect. Abdullah is self-confident and very critical of his society. He knows that his strong criticisms will not be easily accepted by society, and in his narrative he tells how he suffers certain social rejections because of his close association with Westerners. Abdullah is the only obvious one of these seven authors who dares to shock society and face personal risks. For other authors, writing is more to a means achieve their personal interests or objectives via society without disturbing its existing social and religious system or conventions. It is even better if their personal purposes and efforts are seen as being for social objectives rather than for personal gain. Good and effective authors, such as Raja Ali Haji and Fakhri Saghir, try to show their sympathy for and to empathise with their readers' needs, and aim to fulfill these needs rather than their own self interest.

The analysis of the authors' concept of authorship reveals the notion of beauty in some of the writings. Some of the terminology used which reflects their sense of aesthetics, literary sensibility and nuances has been identified. Some of the authors adopt specific terms of expression for beauty, among them are: '*indah*' or '*indah-indah*' for 'the beautiful'; '*manis-manis*' for 'the pleasantly sweet'; '*patur*' for 'propriety'; and '*sahih*' for 'the truth'. However, we observe differing aspects of beauty and varying creative interpretations of

these terms among these authors. Hamzah introduces the concept of the Divine Beauty (*al-Jamal*); Ahmad Rijaluddin focuses on the carnal beauty of woman; Abdullah is interested in and very impressed by the beauty of traditional Malay expressions, such as Malay proverbs and metaphors, which he describes as '*indah-indah*' and '*manis-manis*'. Finally, Raja Ali Haji is concerned about literary aesthetics, as manifested in his notion of good writing (*sahih*, *patut* and *wadiah*). These are the projected notions of beauty of the authors explicitly expressed in their works. However, our analysis of their selected works also evaluates the actual level of aesthetic quality or beauty attained by the authors in their writing. Of the seven authors, we find that Hamzah Fansuri's works display the greatest aesthetic unity, cohesiveness, integrity and universality, representing a significant change and development in Malay literature. However, this notion of beauty and the authors' sense of aesthetics, however, needs to be looked into in a more detailed study.

We also observe distinct styles of thought among these authors. There is a strong reflection of intellectual curiosity, and a tendency towards analytical and academic thinking in their works. These authors have written based on concrete, realistic experiences and have creatively reproduced these experiences within a clear frame of reference, from specific notions of truth, propriety and beauty. There is great appreciation for historical accuracy and validity. Some of them, such as Hamzah Fansuri and Raja Ali Haji and Raja Ahmad and Abdullah, even initiated some form of research or read extensively from various sources before attempting to write. These authors are aware that the only way to win over their audience, and to appeal to their readers' sense of logic and reality, is by proving the legitimacy of their words based on the accepted notions of truth and propriety of their religion and culture. Academic writing and the spirit of inquiry, as far as we know, have

been present in Malay society since the coming of Islam. Theological writings, the *Kitab* literature, contains these features. The works of these authors illustrate similar features and the way these have changed over time and varying historical conditions. We can therefore observe the application or extension of the skills of *Kitab* literature to “secular” writings. This is best reflected in the works written by Raja Ali Haji and Raja Ahmad (*Tuhfat al-Nafis*), Fakhir Sagor (*Surat Keterangan Sheikh Jalaluddin*), Abdullah (*Hikayat Abdullah*) and Salleh Perang (*Tarikh Datuk Bentara Luar Johor*).

What are the factors which influenced and shaped their concepts of literature, authorship and self? To answer this question, let us investigate the sources of influence which shaped these authors, or the dynamics of the literature.

The Dynamics of Malay Literature

Generally, we can classify the sources of literary influence for these authors into three categories:

- a. Indigenous elements (local genius)
- b. The Islamic scholastic tradition
- c. Western influence

Indigenous Elements

The indigenous element is the core or major literary source for these authors. The indigenous elements is the local literary input which constitutes the inner and outer form of the literary output or product. These indigenous elements can be in the form of completed, inherited products of previous local authors, namely conventions; or in the form

of existing local stimulus and colouring and the natural attributes of the authors. Both conventions and the existing elements of local origins provide the raw materials for their writing (such as narrative setting, background, characters, events, plot, structure etc); the medium and style of expression (language usage, proverbs and metaphors); the literary models (thematic as well as generic models such as the theme of loyalty and the *Panji* tales); and the authorial role and functions.

The above analysis of representative texts by these authors shows that conventions have been a significant influence on their work, and have shaped their style of thought, concepts of literature, authorship and notion of self. Even their literary innovations are produced within the framework of conventions. The conventional features of individual authors, including the indigenous elements, are discussed in the preceeding chapters on the individual authors, and are simplified and tabulated in **Table 4**.

In addition to conventions, the authors' native elements give authentic local colour to some of the works. For example, in the *Tuhfat al-Nafis*, the Buginese elements are central to the narration as well as to its message and motive, because the authors themselves are Buginese and are conscious and proud of their land and culture of origin and intend to defend and protect their Bugis image for the Bugis cause. The authors use the conventional Malay theme of loyalty and present their text in the Malay way, and blend their specific native attributes with local Malay elements in such a way that the final product of the text cannot be compared to writing in Bugis. Nevertheless, these native elements have given birth to a distinct literary account of the history of the Bugis in the Malay world, compared to other Malay sources on the subject. Another example of an author's natural attributes is

found in the Hikayat Perintah Negeri Benggala by Ahmad Rijaluddin. Ahmad's personal preference for the beauty and sexuality of Hindu women may be explained by looking at his own ethnic background. These specific natural attributes of the authors, consciously or not, have injected new tints of local colour and perspective into Malay literature.

The Islamic Scholastic Tradition

All these authors are Muslims and they strongly manifest their religious belief and philosophy. Islam and its scholastic tradition is their intellectual and literary anchorage which has moulded their concept of truth (*sahih*), system of values, concept of good writing, authorial functions, notions of self and social and religious responsibility. These Islamic beliefs and values, were initially foreign elements, but after some time, were internalized and became integral parts of Malay conventions. For these authors, the Islamic scholarly tradition provides a paradigm or guidance for more analytical and conceptual writing. With the exception of Ahmad Rijaluddin, Islamic tradition also provides a literary model for these authors, particularly for Hamzah Fansuri, who adopts general Islamic sufi literature as his model of literary expression. Raja Ali Haji and Raja Ahmad were the first Malay-Bugis writers to apply the concept of Islamic historiography as formulated by Imam Muhammad Ghazzali (505/1111), the prominent Muslim scholar (Andaya and Matheson 1982). Our analysis of the selected works above indicate that the Islamic scholastic tradition is a common feature for these authors, which together with their knowledge and mastery of Malay literary conventions, has acted as the dynamics of their literary innovations.

Islam reinforces the didactic role and function of authors. It becomes a crucial determinant in the way the authors resolve conflicts with *adab* (culture) or *adat* (custom) or

simply conventions. Lauddin's testament is a clear indication of how Islam has triumphed over Malay *adat*, for here personal rights and integrity are valued and placed higher than loyalty. Fakhir Sagor condemns certain customs of the Minangkabau people which are against Islamic teachings, and one of the messages of his writing is to create a religious awareness among his people of those negative aspects of their culture, and to persuade them to accept Islam in its purity. Abdullah's strong moral judgements and categorisations are influenced by his religious beliefs. These have shaped his notion of self, characterisation and other literary aspects in his *Hikayat*. In the above cases, the authors seem to project religious values over above cultural values and practices.

On the other hand, authors of other literary texts, namely Salleh Perang and Raja Ali Haji and Raja Ahmad, display harmony and balance in the way they resolve conflicts among self, Islam and *adat*. They perceive that all these factors may mutually support and enhance each other once certain differences among them have been overcome. Hamzah is once again unique, because his subject is totally new, and we find no conflict here between Islam and *adat* per se, only the inner conflict between the carnal self and the Divine Self. Hence, his resolution of the union between self-Self is universal and goes beyond any specific cultural and political boundaries.

The Pull of Tradition vs Westernisation

- Internal Dynamics vs External Stimulus

Contact with the West or westernisation has been identified as an influential factor which determined the formation of innovative works and the new Malay literature (A.Wahab Ali 1991; Ding 1994). Our own analysis of these authors so far illustrates that the western

influence has only been the external stimulus and has not provided the internal dynamics of their writings.

The West provided the initial motivation which inspired some of the authors - such as Lauddin, Ahmad Rijaluddin, Abdullah and Fakihi Saghir - to write and thus acted as their new literary patrons. Personally, westerners were good companions, helpers or employers and political protectors as well as economic providers for the authors. Abdullah worked for the British and other westerners and had close associations with them. Ahmad Rijaluddin worked for a British merchant and his travelogue was the result of his journey to accompany his British employer or friend. Lauddin and Fakihi Saghir received political asylum from the British and Dutch Companies. Abdullah, in fact, was greatly indebted to them for he received western knowledge, education, and even specific guidance from the missionary, Alfred North, on how to write his autobiography. Their works were indeed produced at the request or as a result of their close association with westerners.

In addition, westerners play an important part as characters and in the characterisation of the narratives. Abdullah, for example, utilises western characters to illustrate and reinforce his self-image as well as the image of other eminent local figures in his *Hikayat*. From the literary perspective alone, these western characters give a more realistic tone to the historical narratives. Generally, western influence (of the colonial powers and personalities) was an important factor in the writing of some of the authors. The best example is once again Abdullah and his *Hikayat*.

Nevertheless, these western factors did not really shape the authors' concepts of authorship and notions of self, which were essentially influenced and moulded by Islam and the socio-cultural norms and literary conventions of their time and place. Our analysis of Abdullah's *Hikayat* has proven that despite all the efforts by westerners to guide him in writing and to promote certain myths about him and his work, Abdullah is very Islamic in his perspectives and traditional in his style of expression.

Even the new self-conscious style of authorship upheld by these authors does not follow the western model of individuality as claimed by A.Wahab Ali (1991) and Ding (1994); but is rather shaped and guided by the Islamic notion of truth (*sahih*) and individual religious duty, and the Malay ethos and its conventional notion of "*patut*" (propriety). From the works of these authors, we can see clearly that the attributes of individuality were present in society before the coming and influence of the west. Individuality in the writings of these authors is not of western origin, but has a strong religious and cultural orientation and meaning, with its emphasis on individual religious awareness, social duty and responsibility.

The author's concept of beauty and morality, as shown in the discussion on the concept of *lahir* and *batin*, found in the works of Hamzah, Fakihi Saghir, Abdullah and Raja Ali Haji and Raja Ahmad, is very much influenced by the Islamic theory of aesthetics promoted by al-Ghazali, the prominent Muslim scholar. Thus, the West, though it is an important source of influence on these authors, only acts as an external stimulus. On the other hand, indigenous and Islamic literary models are more significant as they have shaped

and determined authors' concept of authorship and notion of self, and act as the real dynamics of the literature of this period.

Next, how effective are these writers in their works? What are the qualities of their works? What are their contributions to the development of Malay literature? Who among these authors deserves to be acknowledged as a true creative genius or pioneer of Malay literary development?

Hamzah Fansuri - A Creative Genius

A literary text can be viewed from two aspects: the inner and outer forms. The date, genre, structure, style or technique, literary devices and language constitute the outer parts, while the themes, functions, concepts of beauty, authorship and self are its inner parts. A true creative genius is able to produce a novel piece of writing which is totally creative from the outer as well as the inner perspectives.

All these authors in their own way have produced distinct piece(s) of work, and these distinct features are summarised and tabulated in **Table 4**. Based on the analysis of the selected texts of these authors, in chapter 4 to 10, we find that it is Hamzah Fansuri who has written totally creative works from the perspective of inner and outer forms. His works consist of the seeds of innovative elements found in other authors: an author-conscious style and projection of his personality and individuality; autobiographical elements; analytical and academic thinking; and the synthesis of conventions and innovations. Hamzah is able to integrate these innovative elements effectively and aesthetically. Other writers, though innovative in certain aspect are "conservative" in other aspects, either in their style of

expression or outlook. What is more interesting about Hamzah's works is that they were written much earlier than the others; thus his innovations were very advanced for his time and generation.

We may judge these works from the attributes of universality. All the works written by these authors display certain attributes and degrees of universality, such as the fight for the rights of an individual member of the *rakyat* in Lauddin's biography; the human liking for carnal beauty in Ahmad's travelogue; the goodwill and cooperation between believers of different religions to restore social and religious harmony in Fakhir Saghir's *Surat Keterangan*; the need for a good model in life to improve society in Abdullah's autobiography; the importance of good lessons from history in the *Tuhfat al-Nafis*; and the individual citizen's sense of loyalty to his country in Salleh's autobiography.

Among these authors, Hamzah shows the strongest universal appeal. His spiritual and aesthetic journey is of more universal significance and relevance, and is timeless and not confined by specific cultural constraints and judgements. Abdullah offends Malays and his society by his strong personal remarks; Fakhir Saghir only defends his own religious group against another group by seeking assistance from the outsiders (the Dutch); Raja Ali Haji and Raja Ahmad show their pro-Bugis and anti-Minangkabau and Malay attitude; Ahmad Rijaluddin only appreciates the carnal beauty of Hindu women and glorifies the colonial power; Salleh's sense of loyalty may be seen as too feudalistic for modern eyes; and even more democratic readers might expect a more radical action than self-withdrawal in Lauddin's biography. Hamzah's works and his students were been opposed by certain *ulamas* because his writings and teaching were simply misunderstood and beyond their

comprehension, and the rejection was very much motivated more by personal reasons than by purely literary and academic concern (Al-Attas 1966, 1970). Hamzah's spiritual voice is indeed a universal human voice who strives against all "mundane" culture and political differences and even his own carnal self to seek for the ultimate meaning of human existence, and for love and beauty of the Hidden Treasure (God). Quite apart from his religious contribution, Hamzah has written works of high aesthetic quality and of spiritual and intellectual importance. He has made a significant contribution to the inner and outer development of Malay literature. Hence, he is the one true creative genius among these authors.

The works written by Lauddin, Ahmad Rijaluddin, Fakhir Saghir and Salleh Perang were taken out of circulation immediately after they were written, and hence were unknown for a long time. However good those works were, since they were kept in isolation and were not accessible, they did not influence other authors and readers, nor their texts immediately contribute to the development of Malay literature. Hamzah's works were accessible only for a short time, but were later suppressed and "disappeared" from the general public because of the religious and political conflicts in Aceh after his death. Therefore, Hamzah's innovation and creativity did not reach a wide circle of audiences or achieve great influence. Abdullah's *Hikayat* and Raja Ali Haji's work, *Tuhfat al-Nafis*, were printed almost immediately after they were written, and hence these works, particularly the *Hikayat Abdullah* which was widely circulated and read as school text, could and should have influenced Malay literary development.

The disappearance of some of these texts makes these works and their features more interesting. Despite such a phenomenon in Malay manuscript tradition, we observe certain similarities among these authors: they share common styles of thinking and attitudes towards self and conventions. They express their individuality, and use conventional tools to deal with the new themes of their time which arise out of new changes in society to achieve their personal aims and further their own interests.

Conclusion

Generally, we observe a remarkable combination of continuity and change, of progression and conservatism of Malay literature during this period, from the time of Hamzah Fansuri to Salleh Perang. Over a period of about three centuries, there is an evolution of literature, a slow process of change and development resulting from the inner creative urges of a group of innovative individuals who were searching for a mode of self expression whilst remaining conscious of the strong pull of their traditions and conventions. We find no rupture or break in the development of Malay literature, and far from any sign of a literary revolution. This is because the authors have reconciled the binary tensions inherent in their creative process either through the gradual introduction of a few new elements, or because they have only introduced innovations within the framework of accepted literary and social conventions.

Hamzah Fansuri, and his totally creative works, is the exception rather than the rule. As far as we can tell, his radically innovative attempts mark the beginning of truly creative endeavours in Malay literature, but these were not developed further by other writers. The other innovative authors in our study also explored new literary frontiers in terms of themes

and genres, but neither were their efforts built upon or developed by subsequent writers, because of the nature of Malay manuscript tradition and because of the disappearance and suppression of some of the texts. There is no direct causal linkage among their works even though some of them had been known to each other, such as between Abdullah and Salleh Perang, and Abdullah and Raja Ali Haji. On the whole, these innovative authors worked independently of each other, and may be perceived as independent creative sparks or inner voices within society. Based on their own experiences, their writings reflect the slow and independent process of innovations within Malay literature. Yet their works also display common attributes, namely a focus on the self - or personal experience - and religion as the basis of writings, and the use of conventional literary tools to achieve their personal aims and to further their own interests. The distinctive features of their works, however, mirror great changes and developments in their societies and times.

After this innovative phase of development, we observe another literary world emerging. What are the factors which shaped this new literature? What is the relationship between these authors and the new literature? Did these authors and their works influence the new literature which was emerging from a changing Malay society which had been exposed to the new technology of print? These issues will be addressed in the following chapter.

TABLE 4 : A COMPARISON AND OVERVIEW
OF THE SEVEN AUTHORS

BACKGROUND	Harraz Ransuri	Landin	Ahmad Rijaluddin	Fahri Saghir	Abdullah Musyri	Raja Ali Haji & Raja Ahmad	Salleh Petrus
Author							
Status	<i>ulazak</i>	son of pepper trader (Mabodeh Mada)	interpreter, language teacher (Scott Family)	<i>ulazak</i>	language teacher	Bugis rulers of Riau	Datik Bentara Luar Johor
Patron	heavenly (God)	British official in Lais, Bengkulu (Mr. Butler Jennings)	British	the Dutch Company	British	self	the Sultans of Johor
TEXT	Selected poetry/prose written 1588-1807	<i>Elisat Mahkota Muda</i> copied in 1788	<i>EPW</i> 1811	<i>SKS</i> 1829 (or before)	<i>Elisat Abdullah</i> 1843 (written) 1843 (published) autobiography	<i>Tuhfat al-Yarfi</i> 1865-66 (short version) before 1872 (long version) historiography -synthesis of Islam, Bugis and Malay historiographic traditions	<i>Tarikh Datik Bentara Luar Johor</i> 1883 (diary), 1894 (letter), before 1913 (life account) 1928 (published) autobiography
Date							
Genre	* poetry - syair * prose * mix-genres (poetry+prose) * autobiographical	Biography	Travelogue	Testimony autobiographical work			
Main theme	Sufism (spiritual journey)	right and loyalty of individual rakyat	the supreme power of British kingdom & grandeur of Benggala sphere of beauty (fun and leisure)	the religious conflict (Padri war) in Minangkabau, Sumatra sphere of benefits	Own life and the British as good examples of life for the Malays sphere of benefits	history and contribution of Bugis to Johor-Riau Kingdoms sphere of benefits	official duties, self achievement, loyalty and sacrifices of individual rakyat to his country and sultan sphere of benefits (self and country)
Function	Spiritual perfection	sphere of benefit					
Concept of Beauty	Divine Beauty (al-Jamal)		Carnal beauty		traditional expressions (<i>lindah, manis</i>) Binary opposition	Literary beauty (good writing)	social ethics and decorum different for the three types of writings
Structure	Integrity and cohesion	symmetrical	journey through the river of British power	mixture of letter writing and narrative style		Power perspective	
Style/Technique	* synthesis of Malay/Persian * short discourse (<i>mudhazaz</i>) * academic, universal	* realistic * suspense element * dramatic effects * chronological * tragic ending	* chronological * evocative- image of woman * Panji tales as model	* flashback * chronological * evocative- image of woman * series of conflicts and peace	* conventional * chronological * criticalism, <i>masihat</i> * counter-opposed characters	* conventional * chronological * multi-locus * combinations narrative styles	* Impersonal description * non-reflective style * different for each: flowery, brief
Devices	* Symbolic expressions (<i>ijarat, mifah</i>) * taxallos	* <i>panjans</i> * <i>wasiat</i> * brief dictionology	* <i>panjans</i> * metaphors * humor elements	* <i>wasiat</i> * <i>muklasah</i>	* <i>wasiat</i> * <i>panjatun, syair</i> * <i>panjatun</i> * metaphors (<i>linarat, pertandaan</i>) * religious quotations * myths and dream	* <i>wasiat</i> * <i>panjatun</i> * metaphors (<i>linarat, pertandaan</i>) * religious quotations * myths and dream	proverbs and metaphors language competence
Language	Malay and Arabics	* conversational * istana * Minangkabau	* conventional terms of expressions	* court terms * Minangkabau language	discourse on authorial role/function writing as craft God as Anchorage self as model writer	* personal interpretations * comparison of various texts/sources * concepts of good writing - <i>sahib(truth)</i> - <i>panjat(propriety)</i> - <i>wasih(clarity)</i> Malays (intended)	author's consciences personal views personal reminder of official duty focus on social duty than personal life
AUTHORSHIP		* personal voice * author's right and individual property * completed text * perikatan <i>makrifat</i> * author as seeker of Ultimate Love, Beauty	* a record of personal impressions * judgement free	* author's conscious style * personal views			
Audience/readers	Ultimate Love, Beauty (intended) * Malay audience (intended) * aware of their needs for guidance	* British (intended) * Minangkabau people (proposed)	circle of friends (intended audience) Malays (proposed)	* the Dutch (proposed) * Minangkabau people (intended)	Malays (proposed) British (intended)	Malays (intended)	Chinese friend (proposed in letter) the Sultan (intended) the Malays (proposed in life account) self (intended in diary)
SELF (Author)	self-negation self-Self union	Self-pride (father's achievement)	Self-pleasure/brag	Self justification (Apologia) Self-society harmony	Self-and-court centrism self-glorification	Self-defense/justification self-society harmony	Individual in court circle self-society harmony

PART V

CONCLUSION

CHAPTER 12

CONCLUSIONS

FROM MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT CONVENTIONS AND MODERNITY TO LITERARY INTEGRITY

Literature is a special discourse which is rather unique and different from other fields of knowledge. Any literary issue and problem should be treated with a clear knowledge and understanding of the complexity of the nature of its creative process and dynamics of change and development. Any simplistic attempt to search for or formulate a common yardstick for measuring and categorizing literary modernity universally without acknowledging its proper historical and cultural contexts, will be doomed to futility. Only by recognizing its literary discourse and cultural context, can we derive the true forms and meanings of literary modernity, and more significantly, restore its integrity.

To understand and appreciate the roots and development of new Malay literature, or its literary modernity, we need to view it from the context of its specific cultural and historical development, and not from a general notion of modernity or application of any prescribed universal criteria. At the present stage of knowledge, any attempt to judge Malay literature by universal criteria of modernity will only lead to confusion and futility. This is currently happening in the field of Malay and Indonesian studies, where we find various bold, but unsuccessful, attempts to define the new literature based on certain criteria without considering its own conventions, normative poetics and literary discourse.

The Process of Modernisation of Malay Literature

In chapter One, we find a list of factors suggested as criteria or attributes of modernity: realism, individualism, rationalism, westernisation and western literary models, form, the Malay ethos and postulated readers; the printing press; national consciousness; ethnic and linguistic pluralism; the idea of progress, internationalism and timelessness; and intellectual and social input.

This list of suggested criteria of modernity actually highlights a fundamental problem in the study of Malay literature: an inability to appreciate the complexity of the creative process, and the importance of differentiating the cause, tools and symptoms of modernity, and identifying the dynamics of literary change and development, all of which shall be discussed shortly.

The Dynamics of Literary Development

- Between Cause, Tools, and Symptoms of Modernity

The spirit of creativity and innovation exists and is manifest and traceable throughout the history of Malay literature, from the past to the present moment, and has shaped its dynamic development; hence, the modernisation of Malay literature is a continuous and ongoing process. Our analysis of selected works of the seven authors illustrates this creative process and trend.

We observe a remarkable combination of continuity and change, of progression and conservatism in Malay literature, from the time of Hamzah Fansuri to Salleh Perang. For about three centuries, there is a gradual evolution of literature, a slow process of change

and development as a result of the inner creative push of a group of innovative individuals in searching for a means of self expression and the strong pull of their tradition and conventions. There is no rupture or break in the course of this development, and far from any literary revolution. This is because the authors have reconciled the binary tensions by continuously introducing a few new elements and only innovating within the framework of convention.

Hamzah Fansuri wrote totally creative works from the perspective of inner and outer forms. His works contain the seeds of innovative elements found in other authors: an author-conscious style and projection of personality and individuality, autobiographical elements; analytical and academic thinking; and a synthesis of conventions and innovations. Hamzah is able to integrate these innovative elements effectively and aesthetically. Other writers, though innovative in certain aspects, are “conservative” in other aspects, either in their style of expression or outlook. Hamzah’s works were written much earlier than the others, hence his innovations are very advanced for his time and generation.

However, Hamzah’s radical and complete innovations were not developed, and remained unknown or misunderstood and unappreciated by many for some time. Lauddin, Ahmad Rijaluddin, Fakihi Saghir, Abdullah, Raja Ahmad and Raja Ali Haji, and Salleh Perang followed in Hamzah’s innovative footsteps, but entering different literary avenues. They used different genres: biography, travelogue, autobiography, diary and testimony (*Surat keterangan*); and continued writing about the self with an author-conscious style, but each resolved in a different way the inner conflicts arising from the political problems of his

time. All these authors, innovated within the framework of convention; and they changed the conventions according to their individual designs.

Therefore, individuality is indeed an important common feature of the seven authors. Their self-conscious style and readiness to use prevailing conventions to express their present needs and existing challenges and to further their own interests, are indeed a significant development in Malay literature, signifying a transformation of the concepts of authorship and notions of self from their previous domain and meanings. The works of the seven authors show a fundamental change in authorial roles and the functions in the literature from a passive, humble, self-effacing personality with limited individuality, and the use of formulaic expressions, to a higher degree of self-awareness and confidence, and a greater assertion of ones own individuality or originality.

However, this new element of individuality in Malay literature must be differentiated from the interpretation of individuality as discussed in Chapter Two. In Western literary traditions, the following elements are recognized as traits of “modern writing” or are used to describe the “modern writer”:

- i. The modern writer as a man of vision, a creative genius who has extraordinary visionary power;
- ii. The modern writer exercises freedom in thinking and expression for self fulfillment; and
- iii. The modern writer aims to achieve perfect union between matter and form, without being confined by normative poetics.

- iv. The modern writer rebels or is not constrained by official or accepted forms and appearances.
- v. The modern writer produces original and innovative works.

In the Western tradition, literature is seen as a criticism of life. Its “modern” literature is essentially a reflection of a conflict or quarrel between the self and the society. The aim or primary intention of all “modern” Western writers is to free themselves from any form of restriction of society which hinders their creativity. Modern writers, in Western eyes, reject normative poetics and “social responsibilities” which are considered obstacles to self and the creative process. Nevertheless, there are no prescriptive criteria of modernity in Western traditions, for any creative piece of work may be accepted as new and modern, as long it represents a novel innovation and is original in self-expression. Thus the criterion of originality is highly valued and is prominent in identifying modern literature. A true modern author, in the Western literary tradition, is a creative genius, who produces original aesthetic works to manifest his artistic freedom as an individual, and to attain self-fulfillment. This interpretation perceives and idealizes modern writer as a man of vision who dares to challenge and reject the conventions which are obstacles to self expression and innovation. To them, social contribution is best achieved through individual freedom and fulfillment, for by fulfilling oneself one enriches and contributes to society and humanity. This notion of modernity is moulded by the Western value system or philosophy which stresses the value of self above society even at the risk of self-sacrifice.

On the other hand, based on the experiences of the seven authors, we find a slightly different notion of modernity in Malay literature. These Malay authors may be regarded as

men of vision, who exercise independent thinking and expression for self fulfillment; and aim to achieve perfect union between matter and form in writing. They are indeed “modern” for their time and society, though what they have written may not be necessarily new in other literatures and cultures. The significant difference between these authors and their western counterparts perhaps lies in their treatment of normative poetics and the means of fulfilling social responsibilities. Western writers believe in the importance of social contribution, but to them this is best done through self fulfillment: by fulfilling oneself one enriches and hence contributes to society. In their search for self-fulfillment and originality, they even reject the normative poetics.

The Malay authors discussed are also in constant confrontation with society in their striving for self-expression, but they have sought to reconcile the binary tensions; hence aiming for harmony or balance between self interest and social responsibility in their inner struggle against society within the context of history. All the authors have focused on self, religion and political challenges of their time, and maintained certain elements of normative poetics.

Therefore, based on these common aspects, Abdullah’s writings should not be seen as the exception to the rule, as has earlier been observed. Nevertheless, among these authors, only Abdullah, with his savage criticisms and strongly-projected individuality, puts himself above society and, following the example of Western authors, dares to shock society. From this perspective, we may accept Abdullah as a unique figure in the history of Malay literature and culture (see Kratz 1992:36-37).

In Chapter One, we discuss Sweeney's view of Salleh's work. According to him, the distinctive feature of Salleh's writing is that he was the first Malay author to prepare his audience for the novel idea of autobiography, so that the postulated reader is one that a Malay is willing to become. Hence, Sweeney regards Salleh's writing as the first Malay autobiography (Sweeney 1980:18). Our analysis of the writings of the seven authors illustrates clearly that Salleh is not the first author to do so. We observe similar, but much earlier, attempts made by Hamzah Fansuri, Lauddin, and Fakhir Saghir in their autobiographical works. These authors have prepared their Malay audiences and have written within the accepted norms and ethos of their society.

Nevertheless, the issue of the social ethos and postulated readers raised by Sweeney, is more relevant in discussing the authors' varying methods of conflict-resolution and the general orientation of Malay literature than in determining Malay literary pioneership. The social ethos constantly informs all Malay authors, as socially conscious members of the society, and not only Abdullah and Salleh Perang. Abdullah, with his attitude of self-glorification, appears to be out of step with the conventional Malay sense of humility and mode of self expression. He owes his humility only to God, which reflects his strong religious beliefs and moral judgements. This religious ethos and other conventional forms and styles of expression are central to his writing.

Readership is also significant in determining the direction of the literary development. Our analysis of the attitudes of the seven authors towards their audiences shows a significant change in the Malay literary scene and environment. These authors seem to care about the new critical attitudes and intellectual expectations of their readers as well

as the social ethos. That is why their works display a greater emphasis on rationality and analytical elements than on the superstitious and mythical thinking of conventional writings.

The emergence of more widely educated and critical readers with a plurality of backgrounds and interests becomes much more prominent in the development of literature after the introduction of the printing press. The texts during this period are more realistic, contemporary and popular in their approach and orientation, due to this new readership and patronage factors. The characteristics of these general readers, the growth of newspaper and periodical subscribers, and the emergence of new, institutionalised patrons as well as independent literary ones, are all important causes which determined the nature and type of literary works produced. The changing patterns of literary patronage and readership brought about significant changes to the literary works produced.

Therefore, the elements of realism and rationality, suggested as criteria of modernity in Chapter One, are only symptoms or attributes of the changes and are not the causes and tools, and must not be mistaken for criteria of literary modernity. This is especially so as these two elements, realism and rationality, are also found in conventional works. Furthermore, these factors alone do not determine literary innovation, for we have to consider their aesthetic input in the creation of the inner and outer forms of a literary work.

So far we have identified various sources of influence which shaped Malay literature and its dynamics of change and development. During the time of the seven authors, colonialism and western contact acted as the external stimulus for literature, while on the other hand, the indigenous and Islamic scholarly tradition provided its internal dynamics.

But later on, these Western factors became more prominent in new literary developments, consciously influencing and indirectly directing literature, through the mechanics of colonial education and publishing institutions, and private enterprises. Hence, western literary models became the models for local authors after the introduction of printing technology, in their continuous attempt to produce new literary forms as they strove for formalistic innovations. Western models and the Malay language became the common literary medium of expression for local writers, regardless of their ethnic or religious backgrounds and varying levels of mastery of the Malay language. A distinct literary world emerged and it reflected a more heterogeneous culture, pluralistic society and the political changes and entities of this historical period. Indigenous authors, however, did show a readiness to learn and adapt, were inspired creatively to explore the new printed media and forms of expression, and reacted sensitively and dynamically towards the new changes and challenges. Their innovations, nevertheless, were once again done without jeopardizing their cultural and religious ethos.

In Chapter One, we also discussed studies of the concept of modernity in Malay literature. The earliest attempt was made by Yahaya Ismail (1973), who rejects both Ismail's and Naguib's extrinsic approaches to analysing Malay literature. Yahya suggests the need for an intrinsic approach to identify new or modern literature. He believes that literary works should be appreciated as literary works. Yahya has rightly suggested the discourse necessary for the proper study of the subject. But his suggestion is inadequate as it does not mention aspects of the intrinsic approaches required to analyse the literature, and does not provide the proper analytical tools and apparatus needed to solve the problem of modernity in Malay literature.

Between Modern and Good Literature

Another study on the concept of modernity in Malay literature is by Tan (1978). Tan reiterated Naguib's view of rationalism as the basis for modern literature. Other attributes of modernity suggested by him are individualism, internationalism, the application of science and technology, the striving for a higher standard of living, enlightenment, social equality, the conquest and utilisation of nature, etc, all of which would be subsumed under rationalism (Tan 1978:202-3). Tan, in his attempt to formulate a theory of modernity in literature congruent with the general theory of modernisation, does not differentiate the two discourses of knowledge. He does not see differences between the theory of social modernity and literary modernity, nor between the criteria for modern literature and criteria for good literature. The criteria of striving for a higher standard of living, enlightenment, social equality and the conquest and utilisation of nature are perhaps suitable for a definition of social modernisation but not necessarily for one of literary modernity, as writers may still focus on or reinforce social or class distinctions, or harmonious relationships with nature, in their new writings.

Moreover, the criteria of internationalism or universalism and timelessness are more applicable as attributes of good rather than of modern literature. This is because the new literature is not necessary good literature, of universal significance and of high aesthetic value, appreciated and enjoyed by large audiences, in different places and at different times. All the innovative authors discussed have produced new types of writing in the context of Malay literary history, but not all these works may be classified as good literature of international or national standing. Tan's criteria, however, are useful for identifying which of the innovative authors is the best author, a true creative genius; this we have done in

recognizing the achievement and contribution of Hamzah Fansuri. Besides suggested factor of universality, we also need to include originality as an important indicator of aesthetic achievement. Only by attaining universality and originality in self-expression, can a work be assured of aesthetic quality, hence be good literature.

Our analysis so far of the works of the seven authors and a brief survey of selected writings produced after the introduction of the printing press, has to some extent managed to clarify for the confusion surrounding the correct identification of the complex dynamics of the creative process of Malay literature; and it also highlights several misconceptions about Malay literary conventions, innovations and modernisation.

Some Misconceptions About Malay Literary Conventions

Since Winstedt, Malay literary traditions and conventions have been perceived as being exemplified by rigid, static texts, produced through schematic composition, full of repetitive and formulaic forms and devices, and concrete mode of expressions suitable for an oral and aurally consuming Malay society. A traditional text was widely regarded as shared property, with a flexible concept of the text and joint authorship which allowed very little room for individuality and originality. Traditional Malay literature and its conventions have never been seen as dynamic entities, and the only acknowledged sources of influence for literary changes and development are foreign or external cultural influences.

Our analysis of the works of the seven authors, which have been classified as works of traditional literature, reveals the extent of this misconception. The works manifest clearly the personality and individuality of the authors and their distinct features. This element of

individuality was present in Malay literature long before the coming and influence of the West. The works of the seven authors clearly show that this element of individuality was mainly shaped by the authors' religious beliefs, especially from the Islamic scholastic tradition. Individuality in the writings of these authors is not of western origin, but has strong religious and cultural orientations and meanings, with its emphasis on individual religious awareness, social duty and responsibility. The Islamic and Malay ethos together with literary conventions are the main sources of influence which fuelled the internal dynamics of the literary innovations of the seven authors.

We also observe that literature was seen by these authors to have a mixture of personal and social functions, and was not just for the sake of society, as has been widely perceived. These authors used their writings as an instrument for expressing their own interests and purposes as individuals, as well as for serving society. They also adapted and recreated various conventions to suit their own purposes - such as the conventional theme of loyalty, and traditional literary devices such as *wasiat* and *pantun* -. Hence, we find a freer and more creative use of these conventions in their works, rather than the rigid, formulaic applications commonly described.

In their classification of traditional literature, some scholars have distinguish between *Kitab* literature and "secular" literature (see Winstedt 1940; Roolvink 1971; Liaw 1975). The examples of the selected works of certain authors, however, show that such a narrow distinction, which defines *Kitab* literature as purely theological writings for purposes of edification, is in fact an illusive form of categorisation. We find the application and extension of skills of writing *Kitab* literature in the so-called "secular" works written by

Hamzah in *syair*, Lauddin in his biography of his father; the *Surat Keterangan Sheikh Jalaluddin* by Fakhir Saghir, and *Tuhfat al-Nafis* by Raja Ali Haji and Raja Ahmad.

Another popular misconception about Malay literary conventions is that it was court centred. Based on our analysis of the concepts of literature, authorship and notions of self of the seven authors, we find that the *istana* was the theme and setting for works by Abdullah, Raja Ali Haji and Salleh Perang. However, the main themes for all the authors are quite different and not *istana*-centric. Hamzah Fansuri focuses on himself and sufism; Lauddin on the rights and loyalty of an individual member of the *rakyat*; Ahmad Rijaluddin's travelogue describes the supreme power of the British kingdom and the grandeur of Benggala; Fakhir Saghir deals with the religious conflicts in Minangkabau, Sumatra; Abdullah writes about his own life and the British as examples for the Malays; Raja Ali Haji and his father glorify the history and contribution of the Bugis to Johor-Riau kingdom; and finally Salleh describes his official duties, personal achievements, loyalty and the sacrifices of an individual member of the *rakyat* to his country and *Sultan*.

Some Misconceptions About Literary Modernity

Between A Sense of Transition and Permanence

In additions to the misconceptions surrounding Malay literary conventions, we also face several misconceptions about its literary innovations and the concept of modernity. One main misconception is manifested in the use of the term "transitional" literature to describe 19th century Malay literature, first introduced by Skinner (1978). Kratz (1979) is right in questioning Skinner's terminology. Malay literature is changing all the time. Literature is a dynamic and not a static being, and the process of literary innovation and conservation is

going on at the same time. It is too complex a process to be labelled with such term as “transitional literature”. The term also implies that elements found in the period stated differ from the period prior to and proceeding it. Just as when a teenage is said to be in a transitional stage from childhood to adulthood, it means that certain childish elements will disappear during teenagehood and will be completely gone, together with some teenage elements, during his adult life. Therefore teenagehood is relatively unimportant and insignificant in determining his later life, as a complete, adult person.

Our analysis shows that there is no complete transformation, rupture or break in literary developments. We have yet to study fully the preceeding literature to ascertain the real causal linkages and connections. The period after the introduction of the printing press, which is usually called the “early development” stage of new literature, may actually be a period of rejuvenation, regeneration or even degeneration from its genesis or initial stage of development. Nevertheless, a brief survey of early printed works, especially *syair*, shows that the innovative elements introduced by Hamzah Fansuri, after reaching a certain level of development through extension and exploration of subject matter, became formulaic and stale and faded out with the coming of the *sajak*, which has a comparable match in the free verse form of the *mantera*, but has hardly reached the level of artistic and intellectual refinement attained by Hamzah. Therefore, for *syair* at least, the innovative period of the seventeenth century was not the transitional stage but may well have been the prime stage. Similarly, for autobiographical writing, elements of this genre were first introduced by Hamzah, it was later developed by Abdullah in his *Hikayat*, modified by Raja Aisyah to produce autobiographical fiction (Ding 1994), but returned to its purely “realistic” but more simplistic form in the hand of Salleh Perang. Each approach the genre with his unique

treatment of subject and form, and of course, with differing levels of intensity and sophistication. Interestingly, the development of this genre is not linear according to the progression of time. Therefore it is unacceptable to say that Abdullah's *Hikayat* represents a transitional stage for later Malay autobiographical writing and even other works of that kind, for we know that regardless of how much criticisms given to the work his works has attracted, its intensity and achievement is still unchallenged by many writers even today.

In the early stage of development of new Malay literature, the nucleus of creative innovations of this small group of individual authors was not influential enough to shape subsequent development. Even brilliant innovations, such as exemplified by their selected texts, were not followed and developed further by other writers, especially as the existence of their works was not known to many because of the nature of manuscript tradition and because some of the texts were taken out of circulation immediately after they were written. Therefore, other writers usually had to start writing almost from "scratch" (from "a") and were not able to continue onto another level of literary achievement, or perhaps never even reached the initial levels attained by the first writer. Even the widely promoted and well-known works of Abdullah never really influenced the literary tastes and output of proceeding authors, though he managed to inspire unsuccessful "reactionary works" by a few writers as mentioned in Chapter One. The same happened to the *Tuhfat al-nafis*, which moved a Malay author to produce *Penulisan Sejarah Melayu di Lingga dan Riau* (Matheson 1989) to counter the Bugis interpretation of Riau and Lingga history, but unfortunately it failed to attain its rival's literary charisma. Ironically, however hard these innovators tried to please their society and fulfill their needs and expectations, in reality their words seem to be a lone voice, unchallenged and even unheard by their own society or proceeding

counterparts. This is one feature of Malay literary development which is somewhat different from other literary traditions, such as Western literature, which was able to develop speedily and significantly because of a constant or continuous “collective” stream of literary input and output, which enabled literature to change and move from one stage of development to another. Thus, in that literary culture, a developmental stage in one historical period can be seen as transitional, for the next development would always change and transform its existence into a new and maybe higher level of achievement. Nonetheless, the works of the seven Malay authors signify the constant presence of a spirit of innovation in the history of Malay literature.

Between Intention and Coincidence

We also find a piece-meal approach adopted by some scholars. The analysis of authorship has helped us to identify the authors’ intentions and their notions of good writing. This is useful in ascertaining their understanding of innovation and the reasons for certain approaches and elements in their work, and for identifying what written coincidentally which has hitherto been interpreted as innovative by some scholars.

Hamzah’s intention was to produce a clear discourse on gnosis as he was aware of the complexity of his subject. His main aim was to help his readers understand clearly, and thus he uses symbolic expressions to explain abstract concepts. In Sufi tradition the use of metaphorical symbols in sufi tradition is also a form of prayer, for it helps people to concentrate on reaching union with God. These are two dimensions to the function of his words - to reach his God and to reach his audience, man (*Hablu minallah and Hablu minan nas*). In order to achieve self-union and to enable his audience to reach the Path, he

therefore had to attain clarity of expression and not ambiguity, as observed by Teeuw (1989). The complexity of his subject might mean that his works tended to be ambiguous, but since this was clearly not his intention, the effect is merely coincidental appearance. Therefore, this element of ambiguity should not simply be regarded as an intended innovation, simply because this criterion is accepted as an innovative element in the western literary tradition.

A similar situation arises with Abdullah's use of language, where his linguistic weakness is accepted as an expression of literary creativity. Abdullah explains his admiration for traditional forms of expressions and tries to model his language on upon the language of the *Sejarah Melayu*, and even continuously attempts to project an image of himself as a language lover and master, but he fails to reach the level of a master. Ironically, his linguistic weakness or awkwardness is regarded as an innovation simply because in a certain discourse, such conversational or "bazaar" language is accepted as a realistic form of expression.

This is another weakness of academic approaches and methods which neglect analysis based on a poetic approach, and which ignore the concept of authorship. Before we make any critical judgement of a work, it is important to establish its author's intentions for his work. This will help us to gain a good understanding of the work. Without this knowledge, we inevitably tend to make mistakes by judging the works based on criteria which were never intended by the authors themselves. This leads to the making of loose generalisations that certain coincidental effects are innovations, when in actual fact, these

are the very thing the authors intended to avoid for their works, and never dreamt that they would be credited with such personal “weaknesses” in their modes of expression.

Between the Centre and the Periphery

Vytautas Kavolis (1984) has studied Abdullah’s and Salleh’s Perang’s way of beginning and ending and makes the following observation on Abdullah’s work:

“the apparently circular scheme of his life (from Allah to Allah) becomes, what in fact it was, linear (from a traditionalist religious beginning to a modern secular ending, from Allah to cultural nationalism” (Kavolis 1984:66)

Even though political power is the core theme of the works of both authors, Abdullah and Salleh, they actually perceive and interpret this power within the framework of a greater power, God. God is the beginning and end of everything. Even though self-interest is acknowledged and strongly felt, it must be viewed and pursued in relation to God, a personal sense of responsibility as prescribed by God. Hence, God is the anchorage of their literary voyages and exploration, and is not just the point of beginning and end, as interpreted by Kavolis.

Abdullah’s beginning and ending, though significant and interesting, cannot be used to arrive at an accurate conclusions about his total perception of life and literature. This fragmented approach has been widely adopted by other scholars who have quoted his words out of context. An author’s sense of centredness or anchorage is more important than his mode of beginning and ending, and this is only traceable from his concepts of literature, authorship and notion of self. Though Abdullah mentions his western friend in the

beginning and reiterated his authorial functions for the Malays at the end of his work, his sense of centredness - which shapes his perception of life and his own treatment of his works-is actually based on religion and literary conventions, and not primarily western or nationalist factor (such as concern about the Malays) as suggested by Kavolis and some scholars discussed in Chapter One.

Between Modernity and Integrity

Tan's attempt to formulate a theory of modernity in literature which is congruent with the general theory of modernity, illustrates explicitly his misconceptions about literary discourse. Other scholars have made the assumption that a literary innovator should be a social reformer, spiritual reformer, ethnic hero, national hero, or just a formalistic innovator. This confusion is actually worsened by the search for "*bapa sasterawan Melayu baru atau moden.*"

This search has long been an obsession in the study of Malay literature. It was perhaps initiated for ideological reasons by some scholars such as Skinner, but was continually accepted without question by several others, who tried to promote Abdullah at the expense of other authors, whilst ignoring other aspects of the nature of Malay literary development. From our study we find that no single author can solely lay claim to such a title, for Malay literature evolved slowly and developed based on a cumulation of inherited traditions and conventions. There was no innovation in the true sense of the word, as certain authors selected certain conventions to work with, thus relying on the past to achieve their own immediate aims. All the seven authors analysed produced distinctive works and introduced some innovations without breaking the conventions. From this perspective, no

one can be called the “father of modern” literature in the true sense of the term. A piece of work is not the single product of an author; but rather the result of a long process of personal input in response to complex religious, social, and cultural and political developments and surrounding conditions. Each contribution deserves to be acknowledged to understand the totality of the innovation, and the direction and nature of literary development.

Literature or literary innovators have a specific discourse which needs to be judged accordingly. We cannot find any solution to the early and endless debates on “*bapa sastrawan moden*” if we use differing criteria of judgement. Abdullah could be regarded as a social reformer or religious and even national hero by one group, but not as an ethnic or cultural hero by another group. On the other hand, another group might simply reject these plaudits and label him as a traditionalist based just on the formalistic aspects of his works. Hamzah could be regarded as a spiritual reformer by some but not as a national hero by others, or simply as a traditional author because of his *syair* form, the so called “conventional genre.” There would be no end to these differences as long as we adopt different criteria and perspectives for evaluation; and literature would be able to absorb and entertain any perspective of discussion by its very nature of existence. Literature and literary innovation need to be seen in their proper discourse, which has specific formalistic characters and they are products of social, cultural, religious and political conditions. The author and his concepts of literature, authorship and notions of self are at the centre of the dynamics of his literary creativity, responding to and being shaped by external stimulus and internal dynamics; a written text may be innovative and creative depending on his talent, creativity and personality. The search for a literary innovator, or innovative author,

should not be misconceived and misunderstood as the search for a social reformer, spiritual reformer, cultural hero or national hero, though it is possible to find a similar outstanding personality who is able to achieve excellence in both fields simultaneously in a work, as proven by Hamzah Fansuri. Perhaps we may accept that Abdullah is a social critic, as observed by some scholars in Chapter One, and the "Father of Malay Printing" (Gallop 1990:98), but that does not mean that we may readily agree that he is a literary innovator or even "the father" of modern Malay literature. A social, religious or national reformer may not even need to write a single work, but a literary innovator must prove his great artistic talent and skills in written or even verbal form (in oral tradition), and more importantly, should be able to create new aesthetic forms, meanings and fresh insights.

The search for the meaning and nature of Malay literary modernity has led us to a practical definition of the term: it refers to something which is new for its own time, and addresses the problems of its time. A modern writer is a creative person with a new aesthetic vision which makes a significant contribution to the general literary development, either from the perspective of inner and/or outer forms. Modernity is a relative concept, subject to specific cultural and historical dimensions. Hence, literary modernity can be perceived as any innovation and creative production, which is new for its time and place, though it may not be so in another historical time and cultural context.

For the present, based on the existing findings, we may comfortably say that all the seven authors have produced distinct literary works, but Hamzah Fansuri is the great Malay literary innovator, a creative genius, who introduced significant innovations to the literature, in both inner and outer forms, much earlier and more significantly than the others.

Generally, we observe a remarkable combination of continuity and change, of progression and conservatism, in Malay literature from the time of Hamzah Fansuri to Salleh Perang, and even to the period after the introduction of the printing press. For about three centuries, there is an evolution of literature, a slow process of change and development. We find no rupture and break in literary development, even though these authors worked independently from each others. Their works, however, clearly manifest the continuous spirit of innovation in Malay literary traditions and act as mirrors of great changes and developments in their society and times.

PART VI

POSTSCRIPT

- AFTER THE INTRODUCTION OF THE PRINTING PRESS

CHAPTER 13

POSTSCRIPT - THE PRINTING PRESS AND NEW MALAY LITERATURE

The role of printing in European cultural development has been discussed with great insight by Marshall McLuhan (1962,1964,1967). He sees the arrival of printing as an epoch in which new tools, novelties in media, or advances in technique altered and so disrupted European culture that European man was himself transformed and displaced from an "ear" culture (the oral tradition) to an "eye" culture (the worship of literacy). He states that printing is a significant cultural invention and development and describes this phenomenon as the "Gutenberg Galaxy", which brought about individualism, Protestantism, nationalism, perspective in painting and the assembly line, not to mention the purely modern idea that to be illiterate is to be ignorant. With printing, according to him, the medium itself is the message, as we are being shaped by the tool we created and hence culture is the way life being impressed on a community by its technics. This view was later reinforced by Ong (1971,1982,1984) and Eisenstein (1979).¹

In Chapter One, we described some of the views of scholars of Malay literature about the role and functions of the printing press in the development of new literature. The role and contribution of printing has been subject of several studies by those such as Za'ba (1940, 1941), Roff (1972), Ismail Hussein (1974), Sweeney (1980, 1987), Maier (1985),

¹ See his works: *The Gutenberg Galaxy: the making of typographical man* (1962); *Understanding Media* (1964); and *The Medium is the Message* (1967). For reviews of his works see Miller (1971); Steiner (1967), and Lodge (1972).

Hashimah Johari (1988), Gallop (1990), Proudfoot (1985, 1987, 1993), A.Wahab Ali (1991), Md. Sidin Ahmad Ishak (1992); Ahmat Adam (1994, 1995), Siti Hawa Salleh (1994) and Ding (1994). Their works have made us aware of the importance of printing in Malay literature, but they are still insufficient for us to gain adequate and insightful information and to draw conclusions about the impact of the printing press on the process of literary development, especially on its composition or production, distribution and consumption.

Generally, the role and functions of the printing press has long been oversimplified. For example, the printing press has been singled out as a crucial determinant which "revolutionized" Malay literature from a traditional literature to a new one. The following statement may be taken as an example of such oversimplified views:

"Sastera Melayu lama itu adalah satu sastera yang feudal, sastera masyarakat illiterate, sastera yang terbatas pencipta dan penontonnya, sastera kolektif, dan sastera kedaerahan. Perkembangan sastra Melayu baru selama satu abad itu memperlihatkan reaksi yang tegas terhadap sifat-sifat ini, memperlihatkan evolusi ke arah sastera yang anti-feudal, sastera komersial, sastera dinamis, sastera yang terbuka, sastera yang individualistis dan sastera kenasionalan. Faktor terpenting di dalam evolusi ini, malah dapat dikatakan revolusi, ialah alat cetak." (Ismail Hussein 1974:5)

This observation, with its restricted viewpoint, was perhaps due to an absence of studies on the subject available at the time. However, our present understanding of the

matter has been changed by new academic findings. Recent studies by Proudfoot (1993) and A. Wahab Ali (1991), and a close analysis of selected works produced in the early stage of the development of printing, illustrate clearly that the literature thus produced was not “*reaksi yang tegas*” (strong reaction) against traditional literature, as there is no simple dichotomy between traditional and new literatures. Instead, we have both worlds, the old and new types of literature, the manuscript and the printed text, co-existing side by side during this period; and from the examples of the seven authors discussed before, we know that many of the ideas and concepts associated with the new literature and with printing, did not come overnight but were developed in Malay literature over a period of decades.

THE OVERLAPPING WORLDS

- BETWEEN TRADITIONS AND INNOVATIONS

Literary works are printed in various forms and may be classified into two main types: the book, and the newspaper and periodical. Proudfoot has provided us with an impressive inventory of early Malay printed books published in the Straits Settlements, the Malay States of the Peninsula, and immediately associated areas up to 1920. He makes the following interesting observation of the types of books published during the period:

“What we see in these last decades of the nineteenth century is an explosion of the manuscript tradition through the medium of print. The repertoire of the Muslim publishers of the period was by and large traditional. The variety of religious manuals, legendary romances and ballads committed to print were generally printed copies of manuscript texts. They were reproduced using lithography to achieve a form closely resembling that of the

manuscript. In the latter decades of the nineteenth century a torrent of such printed books poured from Muslim presses." (Proudfoot 1993:8)

Proudfoot also notes that the books from Muslim press give us a much clearer impression of popular reading habits and the realities of cultural entrepreneurship (Proudfoot 1993:28). He notices that the highest turnover for indigenous publishers lay clearly in the recreational area as the ten most frequently reissued titles were seven syair such as *Abdul Muluk*, *Siti Zubaidah*, *Haris Fadhillah*, *Juragan Budiman*, *Unggas*, *Kiamat*, *Dagang*, and three hikayat- *Miskin Marakamah*, *Muhammad Hanafiah* and *Dermah Tahsiah* (1993:29). His enumeration of these 10 best-sellers illustrates the "traditional" tastes and conservative consumption patterns of this period.

The strong conservative tastes and orientation towards traditional literature is reflected in the types of translated and adapted works published such as the *Hikayat Gul Bakawali*² and the *Arabian Nights* under the Arabic title *Hikayat Alf Laila Wa Laila*, and the Malay equivalent *Hikayat Sa-Ribu Satu Malam*. *Hikayat Gul Bakawali*, which was first published in 1876, was translated and adapted by Munshi Shaikh Muhammad Ali al-Hindi from a Hindustani version of the Persian "Romance of the Rose".³

² For further informations on the *Hikayat Gul Bakawali* see Siti Hawa Salleh(1986).

³ On the popularity and strong influence of the book, Za'ba notes:
'The adaptation was so natural and spontaneous, the sha'ir and pantun introduced were so charming and rich in poetic imaginary, and the story itself was so like old classical romance, that the book at once caught the fancy of Malay readers and has now become a classic in its turn. Some of the verses have often been quoted and look like becoming proverbial' (Za'ba 1940:144)

Even books published by the Baba publishers, the second stream of Malay-language publishing during this period, are of traditional in type and popular in nature:

"This comprised principally translations from Hokkien Chinese into Baba Malay of cerita dahulukala, that is of popular Chinese novels or tongsu xiashuo, based on the exploits of folk heroes - the most famous being the Romance of the Three Kingdoms (San Guo), the Water Margin (Song Jiang)...These constitute a new genre in Malay without precedent in the older manuscript tradition. Yet while new to Malay, they have deep roots in Chinese popular culture." (Proudfoot 1993:22)

Another contribution of the Baba publishers and also of European scholars, which somehow consolidates the traditional oral element of Malay literature, is collections of *pantun*. In his survey of early printed books, Proudfoot finds that printed *pantun* collections are a peculiarity of the Baba and European scholars. In fact, according to him, the earliest printed collection of *pantun*, *Pantun Karang-Karangan 1889*, was edited by a Chinese Muslim (1993:23).

Colonial Educational Policy

An important factor which was partly responsible for the survival and continuity of traditional literature after the introduction and application of printing technology in the Malay world, was the colonial Government's educational policy. The colonial government was transferred some traditional texts to the medium of print, to meet the demand in the schools for reading material.

According to Wilkinson, who was responsible for the establishment of the Melaka Malay college, the first teachers' training college which catered for the whole country, the aims of the Malay College, Melaka were:

"...to render the students conversant with the best literature of their country and the principles of arithmetic, to instruct them in the principles and practice of school management, the elements of drawing and some manual work, especially carpentry."
(Khoo 1991:186) [underlined mine].

Therefore, traditional literary texts regarded as "the best literature", such as *Hikayat Hang Tuah* and *Sejarah Melayu*, were promoted together with "the pioneer of new literature", Abdullah and his works, *Kisah Pelayaran Abdullah* and *Hikayat Abdullah* (Ungku Maimunah 1995). Besides those texts, Wilkinson collected and published several Malay classical texts which were prescribed for students of government schools, such as *Hikayat Awang Sulung Merah Muda*, *Hikayat Malim Deman*, *Malim Dewa*, *Sejarah Melayu*, *Hikayat Abdullah*, *Hikayat Bayan Budiman* and *Hikayat Gul-Bakawali*. These books were in the *jawi* script and "gained the status of classics of Malay literature in the minds of two generations of culturally-disoriented Malays attending government schools" (Proudfoot 1993:19).

Thus, traditional literature was very much present, and according to Proudfoot it was represented in lithography; and at the same time, a new type of literature appeared using typography. Proudfoot describes this overlapping phenomenon as literary dualism:

"As new media technologies gave expression to new world-views, they might also be adapted to restating the old with new intensity. Such a dualism is evident in the applications of print in the Malay-reading Muslim community. Alongside the new typographic print, lithography retained its attraction...The two print technologies can be related to a cultural dualism which emerged as a product of uneven progress from aural consumption of manuscript literature to a mature print culture...The traditional-minded remained true to the manuscript-in-print, to the old works lithographed. The innovators, those who learned to read in government schools or madrasahs, who read newspapers, turned increasingly to a new literature in typography." (Proudfoot 1993:57-8)

Newspapers and periodicals - especially when typeset- have been described as new literary media. An early observation on the role of newspapers was made by Za'ba (1940). He saw a new spirit emerging in Malay literature with the appearance of Malay journalism in 1876 with *Jawi Peranakan* of Singapore, followed by several others such as *Cahaya Pulau Pinang* (started 1900), *Taman Pengetahuan* (1904), *al-Imam* (1906), *Utusan Melayu* (1908), *Nuracha* (1911), *Tunas Melayu* (1913), and *Lembaga Melayu* (1914). These journalistic ventures, according to him were *"all instinct with the urge of a new interest and ambition. A fresh current of ideas was slowly coming, and as it advanced a new type of writing began."* (Za'ba 1940:148). Roff (1967, 1972) highlights the importance of newspapers and periodicals in Malay intellectual and political development. Proudfoot also acknowledges the role of newspapers and periodicals as media for new consciousness and hence new literature (Proudfoot 1993:54).

Newspapers and periodicals are indeed important literary media, and thus contributing factors for its development, but they did not bring about any sudden or immediate appearance of new literature. Several studies by Hassan Ahmad (1964), Hashim Awang (1975), Wahab Ali (1991), Muhammad Hj.Salleh (1977, 1993), Amat Adam (1994) show that the introduction of new literary genres such as new poetry (*sajak*), novels, short stories and literary criticism, is never revolutionary, but rather conservative, with each genre evolving slowly based on conventional forms and attributes.

Nevertheless, the role of newspapers and periodicals in the development of new Malay literature has also been oversimplified as shown in the following statement:

"Hampir seluruh perkembangan kesusasteraan Melayu baru itu bertolak dari akhbar dan majalah. Malah persuratkhabaran Melayu menjadi sinonim pada perkembangan literari dan sekaligus melambangkan pertumbuhan nasionalisme pribumi. Maka itu tidak dapat tiada sastera Melayu baru itu adalah sastera persuratkhabaran"
(Safian Hussain et.al.1981:23)

The Endurance of Syair and Hikayat

We can clearly see the existence of two overlapping literary worlds during this period, those of the traditional and the new literatures, by looking at changes in and the endurance of *syair* and *hikayat*. However, this chapter focuses only on *syair*, to examine the impact of the new medium of print on Malay literary development.

Syair have been described as an “enduring genre” which has been used as a poetic form for four centuries (Matheson 1983, 1987). Since the invention of the genre by Hamzah Fansuri, *syair* have been developed and popularised all over Malay world, including in Sri Lanka (Hussainmiya 1987, 1989) and have reached all levels of “readers” or audiences in society. When the printing press was introduced, the *syair* was one of the main literary genres which was repackaged from manuscript to printed form to satisfy popular taste and demand. Proudfoot describes the popularity of *syair* in the late nineteenth century as “*syair mania*” (1993:56). *Syair* were the most popular form of poetry, and by the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, we have a “*mass of anonymous sha’ir of third-rate quality... written by amateur poetasters for book-selling and lithographing firms in Singapore to keep the book-trade alive*” (Za’ba 1940:145).

Syair printed in books are mainly based on conventional narratives and are basically reprints of manuscripts. *Syair* were popular because this genre is flexible enough to be used to discuss any new issues and contemporary events. For example, *Syair Nyai Dasima* (1897) by O.S.Tijiang, *Syair Nyai Isah* (1904) by Muhammad Tahir; and *Syair Rossina* (1933) by Tulis Sutan Sati were initially written in prose form and their authors claimed that their *syair* were written based on true historical events.⁴

There are a few *syair* published in *Jawi Peranakan* which report and comment on the contemporary *wayang bangsawan* performances and the people involved in their

⁴ For more discussion on those *syair* and impact of printing on Malay historiography see Muhd Yusoff Hashim (1993).

production. The comments of these *syair* are significant as they may be considered as the antecedent of Malay literary criticism (Muhammad Haji Salleh 1993). *Syair* were also used by several publishers to express their views and to further their own self interests (to be discussed later).

It has been claimed that the printing press influenced and transformed new Malay literature into an “anti-feudal” literature (Ismail Hussein 1974:5). Close analysis on some *syair*, however, show that there was no total break from a feudal outlook, even in printed *syair*, as claimed. Besides new *syair* which were contemporary in spirit, there were several printed works which glorified the feudal rulers, such as *Syaer Tawarikh Zainal Abidin* and *Syaer Tuan Humpreys Terengganu* by Hajah Wok Aisyah bte Haji Nik Idris (1928); *Syaer al-Marhoem Baginda Sultan Abu Bakar di Negeri Johor* by Na Tian Piet (1896); and *Shaer bagi Kemangkatan Sultan Johor* by Fathol, which was published in *Bintang Timor* (1895).

The *syair*, independent of social structures and systems, is a neutral medium of expression, suitable for all purposes. “*Sha’er bagi kemangkatan Sultan Johor*” describes the feeling of despair and loss felt by a loyal member of the *rakyat* after the death of his ruler. It was written as a tribute to the ruler and his contribution to the country. The *syair* is thus a good example of the continuity of a feudal ethos and values, produced within the old framework of court patronage. On the other hand, a second *syair*, “*Ubahan Sha’er*” by Chendor Mata, was an attempt to interpret the meaning of the Sultan’s death from a proper

Islamic perspective, and indirectly contradicts the earlier interpretation. Thus, this *syair* represents a continuation of the *Kitab* literature, with the *ulama* as patron.

Both *syair* illustrate some features of literature during this period. We observe not only examples of reader's responses to printed works, but an actual continuity of certain conventional thinking and styles of expression. The *syair* can be used to describe the attitudes of writers and readers of the period towards the feudal system and religion within new historical conditions; at the same time, there are many good examples which prove the endurance of the *syair* as powerful literary genre in Malay literature.

Literary Patronage

The printing press did not suddenly liberate Malay literature from the ruling elite, who all along had been its controlling agent and had monitored its direction and movement. The nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were the age of colonialism in the Malay world which came under two main colonial powers: the Dutch in Indonesia and the British in Malaya. However, the impact of these colonial powers on local literary development was only clearly seen in the early twentieth century. From then on, these colonial powers took over the traditional role of the *sultans* as literary patrons by setting up formal institutions to carry out the task: The Bureau of Popular Culture (Bureau van de Volkslectuur), later known as *Balai Pustaka*, which was first established in 1908 by the Dutch Colonial governments,⁵ and the *Pejabat Karang Mengarang* (The Malay Translation Bureau),

⁵ For detailed discussions on the role and contribution of the *Balai Pustaka* see Teeuw (1972:111-127; 1984:538); Salmon (1981), Maeir (1991:67-81); and Jedamski (1992:23-45).

established by British Colonial Government in 1924 at the Sultan Idris Training College, Tanjong Malim.⁶ These colonial government publishing institutions therefore continued the traditional task of ensuring and maintaining their own political power and status quo as the rulers of society. Acting as new literary patrons within their colonies, they provided the printing laws and also strictly enforced them. These institutions were very important in setting the trend of development and prescribing the literary canon, thus shaping the direction of following literary developments. Though literature was no longer the preserve of *istana*, it still served the interests of the ruling class in an institutionalized and more organised approach.

Besides the colonial government publishers, we need to look into the activities of private publishers, who were more independent in their approach to literary exploration and innovation. One significant impact of these private publishers was the enhancing of literary works as a cultural commodity. The commercial value of literary works is not a new phenomenon as it was recognised much earlier, even before the emergence of printed works, in the manuscript tradition. Examples include the activities of the lending library in Palembang in 1886 AD (Kratz 1977:14:3-12), and the activities of Muhd Bakir, a Batavian scribe, and "the Fadli Connection" in the nineteenth century (Chambert-Loir, 1984:18:44-72; 1991:191-209). However, with development of printing technology, the commercial or economic value of a literary work became crucial for its very survival. This was especially so when most publishers faced problems such as low purchasing power, the negative

⁶ For further discussion on the Bureau see Za'ba (1940:156-160); Abdullah Sanusi Ahmad (1966); and Hadijah Rahmat (1984).

attitude of readers in payment of subscription fees and competition with rival papers or publishers. In fact, most of the private publishers of books or newspapers and periodicals had to close down simply on financial grounds.⁷ This problem of economic survival was not really faced by the seven authors, though they wrote for other kinds of reasons of survival. Their main concerns were political realities and challenges of their time, as depicted in their works. The economic aspect became important to publishers and the literature of the period after the introduction of the printing press. Literature, especially creative work, was perceived as only being of secondary importance, next to news and business imprints.

Malay literature of this period was influenced by many factors. The literature was shaped by and was indeed a cultural product of the new educated classes in society. This new educated class was of various ethnic and cultural backgrounds, all of which played their part in bringing Malay literature up to another stage of its existence.

The deployment of printing and other media was significant in social relations in Western culture, as observed by one social theorist:

"The deployment of technical media should not be seen as a mere supplement to pre-existing social relations: rather, we should see this deployment as serving to create new social relations, new ways of acting and interacting, new ways of presenting oneself and of responding to the self-representation of others." (Thompson 1990:16).

⁷ For further discussions on the problems of circulation, readership and financial constraints faced by the publishers, either for books or newspapers and periodicals, see Za'ba (1941:244-250); Roff (1967, 1972), Proudfoot (1985:1-28; 1987:1-11; 1991); and Amat Adam (1994).

What were the significant developments in Malay literature after the introduction of the printing press? Did the deployment of the printing press in the Malay world create and develop new social relations, new ways of presenting oneself and of responding to way others represented themselves? To be more specific in the context of our study: are there any changes in the concepts of literature, authorship and notions of self, compared to earlier periods of development, which were brought about by technical media?

Actually, this area needs further study, and in particular, a study of all the important printed texts and writings from all genres of literature. The following observations are only based on existing research findings and my own brief survey of the writings of this period. Thus it does not pretend to be an exhaustive and conclusive analysis of the subject, and can only offer a partial picture of the emerging new literary world and its concepts of literature, authorship and notions of self.

THE PROMINENCE OF INDIVIDUAL PUBLISHERS AS NEW LITERARY PATRONS

The emergence of publishers as professional class is a new phenomenon in Malay society which resulted from the development of printing press. The printed media gave Malay authors a new means or form of expression; and at the same time, the group responsible for its existence, the publishers, also made use of these media to express themselves for their own benefit. The publishers utilised this tool of self-expression to the fullest extent, hence

we observe that the prominence of individual publishers is a significant literary feature of the period.

CONCEPT OF AUTHORSHIP AND NOTION OF SELF - FROM INDIVIDUALITY TO LITERARY STANDARDIZATION

Proudfoot observes that one important element of the development of early printed books, especially in typeset books, is the prominence of a named individual. According to him, there are various means used by the individuals involved in the publication to establish their name, either as author, translator etc. (Proudfoot 1993:55). He also cites examples used to express the author's authoritative contemporary presence, such as how a translator of *Siraj al-Anam* (1921), forcefully established his presence by opening with his portrait photograph; and the *Salasilah Kedah* (1911), in which its author not only named himself on the title page in such a way as to establish his credentials as a Kedah courtier, but further indicated the number of the page within the book, upon which he appeared as a participant in the events described (Proudfoot 1993:55).

However, compared to the seven authors discussed earlier, we cannot attribute any significant new concept of authorship to any named individual author instead, we may only note and formulate some general trends and literary orientations shared by the majority of writers of this period, as reflected in the themes of their writings.

Main Literary Themes

The Malay intelligentsia, including writers, expressed a strong consciousness of contemporary socio-political issues and were aware of the urgent need to solve problem of economic backwardness faced by the Malay community. Thus, they made vocal calls for greater progress and unity among the Malays, which were first heard in the early twentieth century and later developed into more tangible activities in 1920s and thereafter. This literary and intellectual phenomenon of that historical time is widely known as Malay nationalism.⁸

Literature played a significant role in this period as almost all writers shared a similar vision of development for their society. This vision shaped their concepts of literature and authorship, and large numbers of writers selected the issue of nationalism as their main literary theme. Several studies on the writings of this time find that literature was not only reflecting the growing awareness and restlessness in the Malay society, it was in fact also being used as an instrument to inculcate in the Malays a deeper sense of purpose. Even pioneering literary works such as "*Angan-angan dengan Gurindam*" by Omar Mustaffa (1913),⁹ "*Kecelakaan Pemalas*" by Nor bin Ibrahim (1920);¹⁰ *Hikayat Faridah*

⁸ This phenomenon is described by Khoo as follows:

'what was observable in the early twentieth century can be accurately described as 'an awareness' - an awareness, firstly, of the conspicuous presence of 'others'; secondly, of the weaknesses existing in the Malay society itself and, consequently, of the threat posed by 'others' and hence, logically, the need to subject almost every aspect of Malay life to effective reforms in order that the Malays might again be masters of their own country.' (Khoo 1991:178)

⁹ This poem was published in the *Utusan Melayu*, 18 Jan 1913; and has been acknowledged as the first Malay poem(sajak). See Puan Husayn and Suhaimi Hj.Muhammad (1981); and Safian Husain et al.(1981).

¹⁰ This story was published in *Pengasuh* magazine, Vol.2.40, 4 Feb 1920; and has been acknowledged as the first Malay short story(cerpen). See Hashim Awang(1975, 1993).

Hanum by Syed Sheikh al-Hadi (1925), *Iakah Salmah?* by Ahmad Rashid Talu (1928)¹¹ all deal with this issue. It was even one of the main subjects of essay, which were then a relatively new genre in Malay literature.¹² Nationalism as a literary theme, however, became even more prominent and intense in 1930s and 1940s.¹³ These observations reflect the fact that Malay authors continue to face and take on new challenges of their time and place as part of their authorial roles and functions.

New Media and Generic Exploration

Political and technological changes moulded authors' attitudes towards past literary norms and conventions. Malay authors, probably impatient with the limitations of conventional modes of expression and tired of old forms, tried to explore new forms of expression to suit the new literary media, particularly newspapers and periodicals, and the various expectations and challenges imposed by new literary patrons and educated readers.

In the previous chapters, we noted that the West or westernisation acted as an the external stimulus in the writings of the seven authors. However, during the period after the introduction of the printing press, we observe the West playing a greater role and contribution to Malay literature. We notice a strong inclination to follow western literary genres and there were exploratory and experimental attempts to write based on western literary models. The authors might have felt limited and constrained by conventional forms

¹¹ For discussions on this novel see A.Bakar Hamid (1969), and Yahya Ismail (1970); and Safian Hussain (1980).

¹² For samples and analysis of the essays written from 1924-1941 see Zabedah Awang Ngah (1964).

¹³ For more information on nationalism and Malay literature see Kamaruzzaman Abdul Kadir (1982); Hashim Awang (1985); Sahlan Mohd Saman (1985); and Abdul Latiff Abu Bakar (1987).

in discussing contemporary issues and attempting to meet new challenges, thus initiating their search for new literary forms and expressions by following the external models introduced to and imposed on them.

Western Literary Models

Why western models? This is a rather complex question which requires special study, but based on existing findings available, we may say that one of the reasons was the cultural engineering programme established by both British and Dutch colonial policies, which introduced western models through their colonial education systems, and also by establishing colonial government publishers and promulgating printing acts, all of which set the agenda for the direction of mainstream literary developments in both countries.

The books published by the Malay Translation Bureau, especially story books, were exceedingly popular, and most of them quickly went out of print. The Bureau, whose modest objective was to cater for schools, made no direct attempt to attend to the cultural needs of the Malay public at large. Nevertheless, the books it produced, in spite of their limited scope, influenced younger writers, at least in the form and style of composition, and by sowing the seeds of ambition to write better books themselves (Za'ba 1940:159).

Balai Pustaka was established with a wider scope of operations than the school arena. It had a definite policy regarding the content, features and type of Malay language used in its publications, which were designed to provide supervised reading materials for

people as well as for school children. It was very successful in producing “counter-literature” to control and replace works written by radical unionist and leftist writers known as *bacaan liar*. The novels it published, such as *Azab dan Sengsara* (1920) by Merari Siregar and *Sitti Nurbaja* (1921) by Marah Rusli were promoted and became prototypes for the type of writing which was to develop into the mainstream of modern Indonesian literature (A.Wahab Ali 1991:271-273).

In addition to the successful efforts of the colonial government publishers to promote a “new” type of literature, colonialism is said to have changed the perception of Malays towards their own literary conventions and traditions. Traditional literature suffered a severe loss of prestige in the minds of the Malays as its focus shifted from the prestigious palace to the Malay Vernacular schools designed for peasants, compared to English literary models which were designed for the Malay royalty and aristocracy (Sweeney 1980). So even though this policy resulted in the the overlapping worlds or literary dualism discussed earlier, it influenced writers to turn to the West for new literary models and inspirations.

The impact of the cultural engineering programme offers a partial explanation for the phenomenon. The writers were exposed to and learned about the Western literature through colonial educational and publishing institutions. However, the writers themselves also voluntarily accepted and selected it as their literary model. It would be interesting to find out what, why and how books published and promoted by the Colonial institutions, were accepted both by local writers as their new literary models, and the general reading

public who bought and read them. The result would give us an interesting picture of writers' and society's literary tastes and orientation.

Apart from the cultural engineering efforts by the colonial governments, the pioneering role of private publishers, comprising Europeans, Indo-Europeans, English-educated Chinese *peranakan* and Babas, reinforced a Western orientation and literary modeling among native authors. Malay literature in the Straits Settlements and Peninsula Malay States, was relatively conservative in nature because of the strong influence of the *Jawi Peranakan* group, who were more oriented towards Islam and Middle Eastern literature; nevertheless they could not escape from western influences, and in fact were indirectly influenced through their exposure to "westernised" Islamic works written by Western educated Muslim authors and intellectuals from the Middle East itself (Hourani 1993).

Next, what is the notion of self manifested by literature during this initial phase? This aspect needs more study, especially the literature of the Netherlands Indies. The discussion of this subject will be confined to selected literary works produced by authors in the Straits Settlement and the Malay States of the Peninsula, as more studies have been done on the literature here than on Indonesian literature.

General Notion of Self

This period of literary development coincides with the growth of Malay nationalism, which may be described as a period of self-analysis for the Malays. The Malay intelligentsia urged their people to examine themselves, to understand their own perceived backwardness and standing compared to the achievements of the non-Malays. This “collective self-analysis” is a significant social, political and psychological feature of Malays of this historical period. Malay authors contributed to this process of “collective self-analysis” and attempted to explain the Malays as a community (collective self-comprehension) by utilising and experimenting with new literary media and expressions. Almost all authors shared in a collective vision and common experiences. However, this was done at the expense of projecting their own images as individuals.

During this period, the face of individual author seems to fall into shadow again. Hardly any writers wrote directly about themselves, either in the form of autobiography or semi-autobiography, even though the general trend was towards realism, and Malay authors and the reading public took much interest in real events and happenings.

The way in which authors manifested themselves tended to be through indirect or symbolic self-representation. There were many occasions when the authors’ names were not mentioned at all, even for literary works published in newspapers and periodicals. Besides this preference for anonymity, we also find a growing tendency to use pen names such as *Senex*, *Mastari*, *Fathol*, *SiTangan Gatal*, *Kalam Langit*, *Murad* and *Chendor Mato*

whose works appeared in *Bintang Timor* (Ahmat Adam 1994:72). This trend continued further with new pen names such as *Jentayu*, *Anak Negeri*, *Melor* (Wahab Ali 1991:170), etc. This literary trend is interesting, but only leads to further questions on the “hidden” features of the literature: why did these writers “hide” behind their pen-names? Were they protecting themselves and avoiding any personal responsibility as an author? Were they just imitating and adopting it as a new style of authorship? Or was it another form of expression of the authors’ inner, unfulfilled self?

Another indirect form of self-manifestation of this period is by symbolic representation. The authors used metaphors such as pen, paper and ink to represent themselves, as creatively used by Ahmad Rashid Talu in his novels, *Kawan Benar* (1927) and *Iakah Salmah?* (1928). These metaphors had been used earlier by “Cengkarama” in his *syair* published in the “*surat kiriman*” column of *Jawi Peranakan*, 6 nov 1893. In another *syair*, also published in the same newspaper, the author used similar metaphors. In another untitled *syair* published in *Jawi Peranakan* (9.10.1893), the author also employed similar metaphors, and this *syair* was especially republished by the editor of the newspaper as a guide for those who wanted to write *syair* (Hassan Ahmad 1964:16). Perhaps this style of expression, initiated and popularised in *syair*, later influenced other genres, such as prose writing, where similar metaphors were adopted as new narrative devices.

Based on our brief survey, we find that the new literature has a strong collective voice compared to the independent voices of individual authors during the time of the seven

authors. The literature reflects the social responsibility of the authors, but it has eroded their sense of individuality as shown by the authors's fondness for anonymity, pen-names and indirect or symbolic forms of self-representation. Furthermore, the printing press has given permanence to ephemerality, and prominence to literary standardization, by undermining unique individuality. During this period, collective expression overshadows individual author's identities. Though we know the name of the authors and the people involved in the publication of their works, such as publishers and editors, we hardly grasp their individual personality and inner intensity compared to the previous seven authors.

Perhaps the authors felt that the problems of society and the collective social image were more substantial literary subjects than the projection of their own interests; and collective self-comprehension was more important and urgent than personal analysis and fulfillment. A new medium, the newspaper, helped to shape a sense of social crisis and political consciousness. Hence it reached and influenced more writers to share a common vision and aspirations in their writings. Moreover, the writers during this period were grappling with new modes of expression to tackle new issues and challenges. As a result, they were not able to project their own images fully and effectively.

Generally, during this period, the face of the individual Malay author seemed to recede while adopting a conventional notion of self, though within a newly modified concept of literature and authorship. Because of the writers' great concern about social problems, and their limited self-exposure, we hardly hear their inner voices, but only hear

the strong cry of their society, replacing the old commanding “*titah*” of their *raja* (king), their previous patron. It is interesting to find out how far this strong cry of society, really relates to and reflects an author’s inner voice.

COMPARISON AND RELATIONSHIP TO THE SEVEN AUTHORS

Before we compare and discuss the relationship between the writings of the seven authors and the literature of this period, let us analyze the observation made by the group of *Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka* (DBP) researchers:

“Dalam seluruh perkembangan kesusasteraan Melayu baru ini kita dapat melihat sifat kontinuitinya sebagai satu proses yang amat bersahaja iaitu bermula dari bibit-bibit pembaruan dari segi ide yang dibawakan oleh Hamzah Fansuri dan Abdullah Munshi kepada satu perkembangan yang lebih menonjol, lebih rancak dan bererti sejak bermulanya akhbar Melayu yang pertama 103 tahun yang lalu. Sifat kontinuiti yang diselang-selikan oleh perubahan pembaruan adalah satu ciri yang menarik untuk diteliti dalam sejarah perkembangan kesusasteraan Melayu baru.” (Safian Hussain et al. 1981:28)

They observe a certain continuity in development of Malay literature since the time of Hamzah and Abdullah to the period of development of new literature. Our analysis of the literature, and especially of the concepts of literature, authorship and the notion of self, shows that there was no total break in literary development. Instead, there was continuity; but the continuity was in the use of conventions and rather than in innovations.

Various studies on some of literary works of this period show that though writers were exploring and trying out new literary genres based on the western literary model such as novel, short-story, poetry, and literary criticism, there was no total break from conventional forms and norms. Generally, the authors displayed strong conservative attitudes and as far as possible, they tried to explore and utilise fully established genres (such as *syair* and *hikayat*) and adapted these for new needs and purposes. Hence, *syair* were used to describe erotic scenes in novels¹⁴ and certain feudal images were exploited to attract the support of readers in the interests of publishers (refer to the earlier discussion on individual publishers).

A.Wahab Ali (1991) observes that the authors of novels or prose works in the Netherland Indies were bolder in their innovations than their counterparts in the Strait Settlements and the Malay Peninsula. Perhaps the force of conservative attitudes and social pressures were so strong among the Malay authors that they slower than their contemporary counterparts in the Netherland Indies in attempting to explore new features.

Another mechanism used to conserve conventional narrative styles, from either oral or written traditions, is the use of serialization in newspapers and periodicals. This was initially used to solve technical problems such as space constraints, but was later utilized as a publishing strategy to attract or retain continuity in readership and subscriptions just as practised by the *dalang* or story teller in oral literature (Sweeney 1980). Serialization was

¹⁴ For examples of *syair* used to describe sexual relationship see A.Wahab Ali's discussion on novels the *Hikayat Percintaan Kasih Kemudaan* and the *Hikayat Faridah Hanum* (1991:245-6).

also adopted in early Malay book publishing; however, then it was almost wholly confined to *Baba* publishing and is regarded as a distinctive characteristic of the *Baba* Press (Proudfoot 1993:25-6)

The elements of innovation introduced by the authors discussed, and identified as the main features of their works, were not developed further during this period. In fact, in terms of notions of self, there was a return, or even regression, to a former pre-innovative level of self-effacement. The notion of self-Self union introduced by Hamzah was not followed and developed, at least not during this period. Even the self-assertion of Ahmad Rijaluddin in expressing a personal preference for the carnal self was not available among more obviously erotic works. We have several poets expressing personal love problems (Ali Ahmad 1971), but they indulge in escapism rather than positive self projection.

There was an attempt by Muhamad Ibrahim Munsyi to continue his father's innovation by writing his own travelogue. Ibrahim's writings reflect much of his father's philosophy and his literary style (ego-oriented) is strongly influenced by that of his father (Sweeney and Phillips 1975:xxix-xxx). But Ibrahim's travelogue was written within the framework of the old feudal world and did not address the political challenges of his time.¹⁵

¹⁵ For studies on the *Hikayat* see Sweeney and Phillips (1975) and Muhd Fadzil Othman (1976). Sweeney and Phillips describe Ibrahim as "Maharaja man" who takes every opportunity to depict his royal patron in the best light possible (1975:xxviii). Muhd Fadzil observes that compared to his father, Abdullah, Ibrahim was more sensitive and sympathetic towards the Malays, and Ibrahim also showed a biased attitude in favour of the Maharaja of Johor (Muhd Fadzil Othman 1976:lxix-lxxx,lxxxi). It is important to have a further comparative study of Abdullah's and Ibrahim's travelogues. Since Sweeney and Phillips, there has been no other literary study of Ibrahim's work, which even by itself makes an interesting study.

Thus, his work was doomed and obsolete in a period when nationalism and a critical attitude towards the old feudal ruling system were the main intellectual and political concerns of the day. There was also a new short 'travelogue', entitled '*Perusahaan Yang Berpadan Buatlah Tauladan*' with a subtitle '*Pemandangan seorang di perjalanan*' written in a form of a short story and published in the *Majalah Guru* (1925), but it is descriptive and more a report about an ideal Malay village without any social comment or moral. Its description is realistic, but not as sophisticated as Abdullah's description in his *Kisah Pelayaran ke Kelantan*, etc. (A.Wahab Ali 1991:159-160).

Hamzah used literary symbols or metaphors for high philosophical and metaphysical meanings. He explored fully the functions of such literary devices to great aesthetic and semantic success. After him, several other authors attempted to tackle sufism as a literary theme, as found in "*Shair Raja Hantu Pendaya Dengan Seorang Alim Manusia*" (1916), and "*Sha'er Maftah Pengenalan Kesah Perjalanan*" (1930), but they were unable to match Hamzah's metaphysical depths.¹⁶ There were a few attempts to follow his style of expression in *syair* '*Perahu*'(boat), by using very similar metaphors such as '*bahtera*'(ship), '*ombak*' (waves) and '*segara*'(ocean) to describe life etc; but these poems

¹⁶ For an initial commentary on these *syair* see Za'ba (1940:149-150). After him, there is no other attempt to review or study these interesting mystical *syair*.

failed to reach his literary standard.¹⁷

We see clearly that there is continuity in the spirit of innovation and exploration among Malay authors, but there is little or even minimal causal linkage and influence between the works of the seven authors prior to the introduction of the printing press and writings of this period. This innovative spirit and creative talent is present throughout the historical period in question, and is manifest in the continuous attempts by Malay authors to accept and adapt to the new literary environment and challenges without neglecting their native and religious ethos. The role of this ethos is significant as it continuously shapes and determines the authors' orientation, especially among writers in the British Colony. We note that all these later authors have continued the traditional role and function of writers as

¹⁷ The following syair is an example:

Hidup Umpama....

*Hidup ini umpama bahtera
menduga ombak di-tengah segara
dua tujuan di-dalam bichara
pertama undor kedua mara.*

*Tetapi jika bersungguh hati
di-gunakan akal budi bekerti
pohonkan pertolongan Rabbul-'izzati
kelak terchapai-lah apa di-hajati.*

*Pelayaran hidup lanjut ketika
di-dalam-nya terkandung senang dan duka
renchana-nya banyak berbagai nika
kemudi-nya pegang jangan-lah leka.*

*Jika tidak keras kemahuan
tentu-lah kapal berpaling haluan
chita2 tinggi tentu tertawan
pelayaran ta'sampai ka-mana tujuan.*

*Jika daratan kelihatan sudah
jangan pelayaran di-buat mudah
patut-lah menaruh insaf dan gundah
ingatkan merbahaya berbagai padah.*

custodians of the religious and cultural ethos of their society. In fact, the innovative and creative spirit of the authors is mainly set or aligned within their moral and religious framework.

SUMMARY

1. The role and function of the printing press in the development of Malay literature has long been oversimplified. The printing press was mainly a literary tool, and not a cause of literary change.
2. Malay literature of this period is polygenetic. Among the important factors which influenced its genesis and developments, are the colonial educational and publishing policies and institutions, the emergence of new educated elites or classes in society; socio-economic and political changes; technological changes (the printing press) and communication developments in society.
3. There are misconceptions about Malay literature after the introduction of the printing press. It was not a revolutionary event, but heralded more evolutionary changes and developments in literature. The old and the new types of literature existed side by side and overlapped with each other, as we observe the endurance of the *hikayat* and *syair* together with new forms of writings.
4. The literature of this period exhibits of the following distinct features:

- a. The background and status of authors has changed. The authors come from the middle classes, and are of various ethnic origins, and use a variety of forms of the Malay language (high and low variants of Malay) and scripts (*Jawi* and Romanized) as their media of expression.
- b. Colonial and private publishers became the new literary patrons, replacing the courts and religious patronage. The new patrons were more organised and institutionalized in the way they determined the direction of literary changes and provided new literary models.
- c. The social and economic feelings, problems and consciousness of the Malays, generally referred as nationalism, are the dominant themes of the literature.
- d. The writers followed western literary models, especially in exploring new literary genres (poetry, short stories, novels, essays, etc) in order to discuss new themes and to express themselves. Nevertheless, conventional elements were still maintained, as shown in the popularity and endurance of *hikayat* and *syair*.
- e. The concept of literature changed, with the rise to prominence of individual publishers as new patrons; and with the growing commercial value of

works. But all these changes took place within the framework of existing literary conventions, the Malay ethos and the accepted values of the local communities.

- f. Literature continued to reflect the didactic and social functions and responsibilities of the writers, but bore witness to a common vision among writers striving for social improvements.
- g. The writers preferred to use indirect or symbolic ways to refer to themselves. Some writers used pen names while the identity of some authors has remained anonymous to this day.
- h. There is continuity in the innovative spirit exhibited by writers of this period, even though the distinctive features identified in the works of the seven authors were not developed further.

CONCLUSION

The printing press opened up new door in Malay literature, leading to new literary paths and exploratory steps for the different literary journeys. It was an embryonic stage, full of the spirit of exploration in approaching new literary genres. Western forms of literary expression were widely explored as a logical consequence of social and political

developments, and at the same time in the attempt to extend the scope of conventional literary expressions.

The literature produced after the introduction of the printing press vividly illustrates that Malay literature is not a static but a dynamic entity; and it is not monogenetic but polygenetic, as we notice that there are other factors, besides the printing press, which influenced its genesis and development. The printing press was indeed an important factor, which changed literary forms and thus modified its expressions; but it was basically a means or a tool, a mode of intellectual discourse, used by other active agents of culture for various political, economic and other aims, beside literary ones. The printing press by itself did not bring about any significant changes to or developments in Malay literature; only once it had been effectively and creatively utilised by the ruling elite, independent entrepreneurs and the intellectually motivated and socially conscious intelligentsia as their tool or voice in order to further their own interests, did it begin to change the literary environment and thus become an influential cause of change in further literary explorations and innovations.

The writers of this period showed a readiness to learn and adapt, and even demonstrated their creative spirit in exploring new media and forms of expression, whilst at the same time reacting sensibly and dynamically towards the changes and challenges of their time. This process of literary exploration was once again done without jeopardizing their cultural and religious ethos. The new changes in their writings are part of an

evolutionary process, which continues the spirit of innovation and conservatism found among Malay authors. The writers of this period provided a foundation for and issued challenges to other authors to follow suit, to master the forms and to deal with the key issues of their time, with new intellectual insights and artistic qualities.

Our brief survey proves how significant of literature of this period was for the history of Malay literature, as it led to a distinctive literary world. Nevertheless, this new literary world needs to be seen in the perspective of the total development of Malay literature, and hence further indepth studies are urgently needed.

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